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Volume Three

Part I

(A. D. 300-985)

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FOREWORD

THE PRESENT VOLUME covering the period A.D. 300-985 was edited by Dr. R. C. Majumdar, who passed away in February 1980. The Publication Committee of the Comprehensive History of India pays its humble homage of respect and gratitude to Dr. Majumdar, who played a major role in planning the present publication project and, despite his old age and indifferent health, edited Volume III. On this occasion the Committee also pays its tribute to the memory of Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad, who served as Editorial Secretary with zeal and devotion till his death.

Since Volume III covers a long and eventful period, it has naturally become bulky. It has been therefore split into two parts. The present book forms Part I of the Volume, and deals with political history and organization. An exception has been made in the case of the Gupta Age, and its civilization has been treated for the sake of completeness. Although a list of abbreviations has been provided, the present work lacks bibliography, illustrations, index, etc., which will be included in Part II. Meanwhile we have great pleasure in releasing Part I.

Notwithstanding a reaction against political history in our country during the last two decades or so the importance of this branch of historical studies remains undiminished. The study of social, economic, literary, artistic and religious developments is inconceivable without a background of the political history of the various regions of the subcontinent in Gupta and post-Gupta times. Some of the problems such as the origins of the Guptas, Pallavas, Chālukyas, various groups of Rajputs, etc., present not only the difficulties of political and geographical identification but also of social and religious validation, not to speak of the tribal background of several ruling dynasties. The Rāma-Gupta question also carries social implications. The contributors to this volume have dealt with such thorny problems including those of the extent of the kingdoms of the important dynasties. In many cases the opposing points of view are given to enable the reader to form his own judgement. The contributors have tried to avoid regionalistic approach and present, as far as possible, a source-

based account of wars and conquests. At the end of the chapters dealing with major dynasties lists of relevant inscriptions have been provided for ready reference and further research.

It has taken us a long time in getting the chapters printed with the result that some latest publications have not been used. But it is hoped that the volume will provide a good sample of the ripe scholarship of our contributors, who have not only given us the fruits of their own research but have also incorporated the significant finds of other scholars. We are sorry to note that several of them are not alive to see their pieces in print. We take this opportunity of sincerely thanking all our writers who have enabled this cooperative work to materialise. Our thanks are further due to Dr. K. K. Dasgupta, who jointly edited the volume along with Dr Majumdar. We also thank Shri V. K. Jain for preparing a list of abbreviations.

17 December 1981

R. S. SHARMA
Secretary, Publication Committee
of *A Comprehensive History of India*

PREFACE

THE THIRD VOLUME of *A Comprehensive History of India* covers the period, roughly speaking, from A.D. 300 to A.D. 985. It has been, for the sake of convenience, split into two parts: the first part deals with the political history and political organization (Chapters I-XXVII), while the second with social, economic, religious and cultural conditions as well as coinage (Chapters XXVIII-XXXV).

The present volume dwells on a very significant period of ancient Indian history. It witnessed the culmination of the Indian genius on the one hand and the beginning of its decline on the other. The Imperial Guptas with whom the volume opens ably countered the centrifugal forces in Northern India and the kingdom established by Chandra-gupta I, one of the early members of the family, was shortly converted by his son, Samudra-gupta, into an empire. The Gupta empire, reared up by a succession of competent rulers, gave North India not only political stability and imperial peace, but also set an exemplary standard in all departments of life and culture. Indeed, the advent of the Guptas on the political stage ushered in an epoch which has rightly been called the 'Golden Age' or the 'Classical Period' of Indian history, which is still remembered for the literary colossus Kālidāsa, eminent scientists of the stature of Āryabhaṭa and Varāhamihira, metallurgical wonder such as the Iron Pillar at Meherauli, splendid sculptures of the Sarnath school and the remarkable paintings of Ajanta. It was an age which witnessed brisk commercial and colonial and cultural activities abroad, the final development of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, efflorescence of Sanskrit literature, definite shaping of the extensive Puranic literature, and the culmination of an age-long religious movement in what goes by the name of Hinduism. In spite of the fact that the society of the time had conceivably its tensions, stresses and ferments, India during the Gupta period achieved a total vision of life and gave an able expression to it. Admittedly the Gupta period left a deep and wide impress upon the posterity and in ways more than one the Indians of the succeeding ages built on the same heritage.

With the passing of the Imperial Guptas around A.D. 550 begins the second chronological sector of the period which extends

to A.D. 985. Generally designated as the 'Early Medieval Period', it was an age of regionalism. Indians lost their sense of national being and the totality of vision of life. The spirit of the *jānapada* autonomy reared its head once more and barring the kingdoms or empires (some of which at times were quite extensive), such as the ones set up by the Pālas, Pratihāras, Rāshṭrakūṭas, Western Chālukyas, Pallavas and Cholas, India broke up into congeries of regional states. And even major empires such as those of the Pālas, Pratihāras, Pallavas and Cholas, were but magnified kingdoms and seldom embodied the pan-Indian ideal of the Maurya and the Gupta periods. Regionalism articulated itself in other spheres of life and activities of the country. The rise of regional states implying the lack of a central authority was accompanied by a new politico-economic system called feudalism which was becoming preponderant from the seventh century onwards. The new institution, based on a hierarchy from the king to the land-bound peasant, each owing allegiance to his next higher master, was expressive of an essentially local outlook. And this localism was further spelt out when the number of intermediaries increased. The regional factor also manifested itself in the realms of religion and culture. The rise of several religious subsects and the appearance of the Nāgara and Drāviḍa temple styles are instances in point. What is more, the period witnessed the emergence of regional languages, script and art styles, which later collectively formed the tapestry of the Indian culture.

The medieval period in Indian history is often equated with political instability, social insecurity and cultural degeneration. Such an equation is more apparent than real. The early medieval period of our history, like the later medieval, in spite of some dismaying features, has silver linings too. Compared to the Gupta period it was certainly an age of decline and decadence. It was an age of political fragmentation and cultural insularity. It was not an epoch of Kālidāsa and Āryabhaṭa. Yet the contributions of Bāṇa and Rājaśekhara, Saṅkarāchārya and Vāchaspati-miśra, Udbhaṭa and Ānandavardhana, Medhātithi and Mādhavakara, and several academics of the universities of Nālandā, Vikramaśilā and Somapura, to our literature and intellectual life can hardly be over-emphasized. Similarly, the splendid monuments and reliefs of Bādāmi, Ellora, Elephanta and Mahābalipuram, the early architectural examples and sculptures of Bhuvanesvara and Khajuraho, and the paintings of Bittanavasal speak a plastic language which is far from insipid and inane.

The early medieval period is significant for another reason. It was an age which brought the trends and tendencies of the Gupta period

to fulfilment on the one hand and opened the fresh possibilities for the future in different areas of our life and culture on the other. For example, it represented the finality of the *stūpa* and cave architecture of the previous period and inaugurated the era of the Nāgara and Drāviḍa temple styles, the archetypes of which were on view in the Gupta monuments. Feudalism, the genesis of which was seen in the late Gupta period, saw a widespread development during this period and later. The cult-icons of this period presented a tale of ideas and ideations and their fascinating interplay, not heard of in previous ages. Similarly, the new powers who appeared following the fall of the Pratihāras and later came to be collectively known as the Rajputs played not an inconsiderable role in our life and culture. Moreover, the Muslims who appeared on the political scene during this period, specifically around A.D. 1000 under the leadership of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, subsequently became a potent factor in Indian history and culture, and indeed they imparted a new vitality to the Indian life. Viewed as a whole, therefore, the early medieval period of India is not that bleak and decadent as is generally believed. On the contrary, it is varied, rich and complex in its content and character, and thus deserves a more in-depth study than has so far been done.

II

The present volume has been in the printing stage for more than a decade and some of the chapters were written well-nigh twenty-five years ago. However, the chapters have been revised by Dr. Majumdar and me in the light of new materials and fresh interpretations. In spite of our best efforts there may still be some shortcomings which could not be altogether eliminated. The editorial comments on most occasions appear as footnotes either under the initials of R. C. Majumdar (RCM) or under the word 'editor' or 'ed' or under my initials (KKDG). Shortage of time has forbidden us from including maps, photographs, index and addenda et corrigenda in the present part; they will be appended to the second part. We crave the indulgence of the readers for the inconvenience they will experience.

Regrettably some of the authors of the chapters of this volume, including R. C. Majumdar, are no longer in our midst, and it is painful that Dr. Majumdar did not live to see the volume in print. I pay my homage to Dr. Majumdar and other contributors to the volume, who are no more. I offer my respect to Sri Satchidananda Bhattacharyya, who in the midst of preparing the press copies of some of

the initial chapters, prematurely passed away. I also offer my respect to the memory of Professor Bisheshwar Prasad, who was looking after the present and other volumes of the series, for his help and cooperation. My grateful thanks are due to Professor R. S. Sharma and Professor Satish Chandra for the help and encouragement they have given me at different stages of the progress of the volume. I am thankful to my friend Karunasankar Ray, Bar-at-law, for evincing keen interest in the publication of this volume. Finally, I must thank Sri Subodh Roy, Srimati Sipra Lahiri and the PPH English editorial department for ready cooperation.

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15 December 1981

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI. Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
AHD. *Ancient History of the Deccan*, by G. Jouveau Dubreuil.
AIG. *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, by R. D. Banerji.
AR. *Rāshtrakūṭas and their Times*, by A. S. Altekar.
ARE. or ARIE. *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy.*
ASIAR. *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.*
ASR or ASC. *Archaeological Survey of India, Reports* by A. Cunningham.
ASSI. *Archaeological Survey of Southern India.*
ASWI. *Archaeological Survey of Western India.*

BV. *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, Bombay.
BDCRI. *Bulletin of the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute*, Poona.
BEFEO. *Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d' Extreme Orient*, Hanoi.
BG. *Bombay Gazetteer.*
Bh. List. *A List of Inscriptions of Northern India*, by D. R. Bhandarkar (Appendix to EI, XIX-XXIII).
BMCAWK. *British Museum Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty* etc., by E. J. Rapson.

Cal. Rev. *Calcutta Review.*
CCIM. *Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta.
CGD. *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Śaśāṅka, King of Gauḍa* (in the British Museum), by John Allan.
CHI. *Cambridge History of India.*
CII. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.*
CMI. *Coins of Medieval India*, by A. Cunningham.
CP. Copper-plate.

DHNI. *Dynastic History of Northern India*, by H. C. Ray.
DKA. *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, by F. E. Pargiter.
DKD. *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, by J. F. Fleet.

EC. *Epigraphia Carnatica.*
EDA. *Early Dynasties of Andhradeśa*, by B. V. Krishna Rao.

EHBP. *The Early History of Bengal* by P. L. Paul.
EHD. *Early History of the Dekkan*, by R. G. Bhandarkar.
EHI. *Early History of India*, by V. A. Smith.
EI. *Epigrahia Indica.*
EZ. *Epigraphia Zeylanica.*

FAS. *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, by V. A. Smith.
FTL. *Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms, Being an Account of the Chinese monk Fa-hien's Travels*, Translated by J. H. Legge.
GE. Gupta Era.
GOS. Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Baroda.

HABM. *History of Ancient Bengal*, by R. C. Majumdar.
HB or HBR. *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, edited by R. C. Majumdar.
HC. *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa.
HCIP. *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
HIED. *History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, edited by Elliot and Dowson.
HISI. *Historical Inscriptions of South India*, by R. B. Sewell.
HNI. *History of North-Eastern India*, by R. G. Basak.
HRS. *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*, by U. N. Ghoshal.
HTB. *Buddhist Records of the Western World, Translated from the Chinese of Huien Tsang*, by Samuel Beal.
HTW. *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, by T. Watters.

IC. *Indian Culture*, Calcutta.
IHIJ. *Imperial History of India*, by K. P. Jayaswal.
IHQ. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Calcutta.
Ind. Arch. *Indian Archaeology, A Review* (Archaeological Survey of India).
IRT. *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*, by I-tsing, translated by J. Takakusu.

JA. *Journal Asiatique*, Paris.
JAHC. *Journal of the Andhra History and Culture.*
JAHRS. *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, Rajamundry.
JARS. *Journal of the Assam Research Society.*
JAS. *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Calcutta.
JBBRAS. *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Bombay.
JBISM. *Journal of the Bharat Itihasa Sanshodak Mandal*, Poona.
JBORS. *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Patna.

JBRS. *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, Patna.
JDL. *Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University.
JIH. *Journal of Indian History*, Madras.
JKHRS. *Journal of the Kalinga Historical Research Society*, Bolangir
JMU. *Journal of Madras University.*
JNSI. *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Bombay and Varanasi.
JOR or JORM. *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras.
JPASB. *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Calcutta.
JRAS. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, London.
JRASBL. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Letters, Calcutta.
JTA. *Journal of the Telugu Academy.*
JUPHS. *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society.*

KS or Kss. *Kāmparūpa-śāsanāvalī.*

Life. *The Life of Hiuen Tsang* by Saman Hwui Li, with an introduction, etc., by Samuel Beal.

MAR. *Mysore Archaeological Report.*
MASI. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.*
MBH. *Mahābhārata.*

NC. *Numismatic Chronicle.*
NDI. *Inscriptions of the Nellore District*, by Batterwarth and Vēṇugopālaachetty.
NHIP. *New History of the Indian People*, edited by R. C. Majumdar and A. S. Altekar.
NIA. *New Indian Antiquary*, Bombay.
NPP. *Nāgarī Prachāriṇī Patrikā* (in Hindi), Benaras.
NS. New Series.
NSP. Nirṇaya-Sāgar Press, Bombay.

Num. Supple. Numismatic Supplement.
PAIOC or POC. *Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference.*
PHAI. *Political History of Ancient India*, by H. C. Raychaudhuri.
PIHC. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.*
PRASI. *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India* Western Circle.
PTS. Pali Text Society, London.

QJMS. *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, Bangalore.

Raj. *Rājataraṅgiṇī of Kalhaṇa.*
Ram. *Rāmāyaṇa.*

SI. *Select Inscriptions* (Vol. I), edited by D. C. Sircar.
SII. *South Indian Inscriptions.*
Suc. Sat. *Successors of the Sātavāhanas in the Lower Deccan*, by D. C. Sircar.

TAS. *Tranvancore Archaeological Series.*
THK or TK. *History of Kanauj*, by R. S. Tripathi.

ZDMG. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*

ERRATA

Page 43, fn. 70
Read *HABM*, 8, instead of *HABR*, 8.

Page 468, fn. 79a
Read Yazdani (ed), *Early History of the Deccan*, p. 509, instead of *History of the Deccan*, I, p. ?.

CHAPTER ONE

INDIA IN A. D. 300

THE FIVE CENTURIES THAT followed the death of the great Maurya Emperor Aśoka witnessed great changes in the political history of India. The great Magadhan empire gradually passed away, and though it is difficult to trace clearly the successive stages in its decline, there is no doubt that it had ceased to exist before, perhaps long before, the beginning of the Christian era. There has been much speculation about the causes that led to the downfall of the empire, but it is adequately accounted for by the two potent factors that were certainly at work, viz the normal centrifugal forces in Indian politics and the invasions from the north-west. These two might not have been absolutely independent, and we might easily conceive each to have strongly reacted on the other. Nevertheless, we can not only distinguish these two factors, but clearly trace their effect upon Indian politics down to the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the period with which this volume begins.

The history of the successive foreign hordes that established political power in India has been dealt with in detail in the preceding volume. The last of them, the Kushāṇas, grew very powerful and established a vast empire, but they could not eliminate altogether either the foreign rulers that preceded them or the various small principalities that arose in North India on the ruins of the Magadhan empire. The Kushāṇa empire broke down within a century, and its gradual dissolution gave rise to new indigenous principalities or revived those it had overthrown.

The date of the Kushāṇas still remains one of the few unsolved problems of Indian chronology. In consonance with the view of the great majority of scholars it has been assumed that Kanishka ascended the throne in A.D. 78, the epoch of the Śaka era, though this view cannot be regarded as anything more than a hypothesis. As a matter of fact scholarly opinion is steadily tending to push forward this date by at least half a century or more. In any case it would not be safe to presume that the Kushāṇa empire came to an end long before A.D. 200. It is not even unlikely that it continued for some time even in the third century A.D. But whatever may be the date of the end of the empire, the Kushāṇas continued as a ruling power, with circum-

scribed powers, in the north-west throughout the third century and even far down into the succeeding century.

The Śakas who set up various principalities in India before the Kushāṇas, and were perhaps subjugated by them for a time, survived the Kushāṇa empire, and continued to rule as a great power in Western India, principally in Mālava and Surāshṭra, down to the close of the fourth century A.D.

Thus when the curtain rises on the political stage of India in A.D. 300, we find the two foreign powers, the Śakas and the Kushāṇas, occupying nearly the whole of the western and north-western regions. The rest of Northern India is divided into a large number of independent or semi-independent principalities, ruled over by either hereditary kings or non-monarchical clans. Among the latter, which occupied the western part, the Mālavas and Yaudheyas occupied a prominent position. Not much is known of the kings or kingdoms, though the Nāgas and Bhāraśivas are better known than the rest. The names of many others are known from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra-gupta to which further reference will be made later. Indeed the detailed picture of the contemporary political condition of India, which this remarkable epigraph unfolds before our eyes, may be regarded as equally true of the beginning of the fourth century A.D.

The political condition of the Deccan was not much unlike that of North India, but all traces of foreign rule had disappeared from that region. The fall of the Sātavāhana empire was followed by the rise of a number of petty ruling families, one of which was gradually rising into prominence. It was the Vākāṭakas whose early history has been described in the preceding volume.

The downfall of the Sātavāhana empire also led to great changes in the political condition of South India. New rulers of northern origin set up independent principalities. These were probably the governors or other local officials of the Sātavāhanas, and took advantage of the weakness of the central government to declare independence. The family of one of them, the Pallavas, rose into prominence about the same time as the Vākāṭakas and, along with the Pāṇḍyas, soon dominated nearly the whole of South Indian peninsula. For five hundred years the Tamil powers of hoary antiquity like the Cholas and the Cheras sank into political insignificance. Thus for nearly the whole of the period with which this volume deals, the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas occupied the stage of South Indian history and maintained a continuity in politics which the rest of India lacked.

The Vākāṭakas, too, occupied a dominant position at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. They not only ruled over a large part of the

Deccan, but were also gradually extending their power into North India. Indeed it appeared very probable that they would succeed in re-establishing the political hegemony of India. But this was not to be. That part was destined to be played by the Guptas, who occupied a very insignificant position in A.D. 300 as rulers of a petty principality in Eastern India. The achievements of this family which fill the pages of Indian history during the next two centuries thus form the starting point of this volume.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RISE OF THE GUPTAS

I. ORIGIN

THE SURNAME 'GUPTA' HAS BEEN immortalized in the history of India by the imperial family which held sway over a large part of Northern India in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. But Gupta, as the end of a personal name, and the name of a clan or family, can be traced to a much earlier time. Of the former the most illustrious examples are furnished by Chandra-gupta, the founder of the Maurya empire and the Buddhist monk Upa-gupta who converted Aśoka. Coming down to later times[1] we come across names of royal officials in Sātavāhana period such as Pari-gupta, Śiva-gupta, and Śivaskanda-gupta. The clan-name Gupta is evidenced by the Prākṛit metronymic Gotiputa which is equivalent to Sanskrit Gauptī-putra, the son of a lady belonging to Gupta clan. This metronymic occurs no less than a dozen times in records engraved on stone before the rise of the imperial Guptas. An analysis of these records shows that the Gauptī-putras belonged to different parts of North India and the Deccan and pursued different vocations. They were saints, monks, warriors, royal scribes, and goldsmiths. Some of them belonged to the royal family and one is called a Mahāraṭhi, a term which has been taken in another context to mean a king of the Rāshṭrikas, i.e. of the Maratha country.[2] The chief queen of a royal family is specifically referred to as belonging to the Gupta family (*Gupta-Vamśoditā*).

It was held in a later age that Gupta was the surname of a Vaiśya.[3] This can hardly be true of the early period with which we are dealing. For it appears that not only individuals with the surname, but even persons descended from Gupta clan on their mother's side, pursued the different walks of life appropriate to all the first three *varṇas* or social orders.

But although the existence of Gupta clans or families in different parts of India is thus established on good authority, we cannot say

1 Lüders, *List.* Nos. 11, 92a, 94, 96, 156, 194, 271, 442, 663, 680-82, 1088, 1105, 1125.

2 *CHI*, I, 530.

3 *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, Bk. III, Ch. 10, v. 9, Cf. *CII.*, III, 11, n.1.

whether there was a parent stock from which all these were derived. It is not unlikely that there was one important clan or family which ramified in course of time and spread in different parts of India, or at least that there was a fiction of such a common descent, but it cannot be proved by any satisfactory evidence.

But even if any such notion of a primitive Gupta clan prevailed in India in the third century A.D., it is difficult to filiate the imperial Gupta family to it. The early records of this family do not refer to it as 'Gupta', and the later appellation '*Guptānvaya*' or 'Gupta family' might be solely due to the fact that the names of all the kings beginning from Chandra-gupta I ended in the word Gupta. An exact analogy is furnished by the Pālas of Bengal whose family name *Pālānvaya* is undoubtedly derived from the name-ending of all its members.

Indeed the case of the imperial Guptas is somewhat more difficult. In the first place, here the word Gupta is not the name-ending of the first ruler, nor a part of his name, as is the case with Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty. It is the full name. For although the name is written as Śrīgupta in the Gupta genealogy, and some take the whole of it as the name of the king, there can be hardly any doubt that '*Śrī*' is not an integral part of the name but merely an honorific prefix, such as has been added to the names of other kings in the same genealogy.[4] Gupta, as the name of a person, is not, of course, unthinkable, nor even altogether unknown. For, according to *Divyāvadāna,* it was the name of the father of the Buddhist monk Upagupta, and we have two seals with the legend '*Guptasya*' (of Gupta).[5] But it is not also unlikely that in all these cases Gupta is a mere abbreviation of a fuller name ending in Gupta. Such practices are sanctioned by Sanskrit grammarians, and according to the *Mahābhāshya,* the name *Satyabhāmā* can be represented by either 'Satyā' or 'Bhāmā'. Perhaps we have an instance of this kind in the Eran Inscription where Dattā stands for Dattadevī, the name of the chief queen of Samudra-gupta.[6] The name of the founder of the Gupta family, as given in the Gupta records, viz Gupta, may therefore be a contracted form of a bigger name, represented only by its last part. But the first part need not necessarily be Śrī.

Secondly, the successor of Gupta, i.e. the second king of the family, is simply called Ghaṭotkacha, without the name-ending

4 Cf. *CII,* III, 8-9, n.3.

5 *JRAS,* 1901, 99; 1905, 814. Cf. also *JNSI,* IX, 137 for Gupta as the synonym of Vishṇu.

6 *SI,* 261, n.3.

Gupta. Here, also, we may hold that it is a shortened form of the full name which is represented only by the first part.[7]

It is thus possible, though by no means certain, that the first two kings of the imperial family, like the rest, had names ending in 'Gupta'. It is, therefore, uncertain whether the family really belonged to any existing Gupta clan or simply got the appellation 'Gupta' in later times from the fact that the king who raised it to power and distinction bore the name Chandra-gupta, and, perhaps, in imitation of him, all his successors had names ending in 'Gupta'.

II. GUPTA AND GHATOTKACHA

No record of the first two kings has yet come to light. All that we know of them is derived from the genealogical account, which is first met with in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription (No. 3)[8] of Samudra-gupta and is repeated word for word in many later records of the family. In this account Samudra-gupta is described as 'the great-grandson of the *Mahārāja,* the illustrious (*Śrī*) Gupta, the grandson of the *Mahārāja,* the illustrious (*Śrī*) Ghaṭotkacha, the son of the *Mahārājādhirāja,* the illustrious (*Śrī*) Chandra-gupta, and the daughter's son of Lichchhavi (*Lichchhavi-dauhitra*) begotten on the Mahādevī Kumāradevī'.

The first thing that strikes us in this conventional genealogical account is the deliberate contrast in the royal titles applied to the first two kings and the third. It leaves no doubt that king Chandra-gupta was far more powerful, and occupied a much higher status than his two predecessors. As we shall see later, he was the real founder of the greatness of the family.

Both Gupta and his son Ghaṭotkacha are called *mahārāja.* The exact significance of this title is difficult to determine. The title is used by itself in respect of great kings like Kanishka and Huvishka, and must therefore have indicated paramount sovereignty. It is, however, pointed out by Fleet that 'in the early Gupta and subsequent periods *mahārāja* was habitually used simply as a technical official title, indicative no doubt of considerable rank and power, but applied only to feudatories, not to paramount sovereigns'.[9] This view, though now generally held, can hardly be accepted as correct. For, although the feudatories are called *mahārāja,* we find on the other hand that in the inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas, the title *mahārāja* is applied not

7 It may be noted that a later member of this family is actually called Ghaṭotkacha-gupta.

8 The number within brackets refers to the serial number of Gupta inscriptions given at the end of this volume.

9 *CII,* III, 15, n.4.

only to the Vākāṭaka kings but also to Bhavanāga, the Bhāraśiva ruler, who is said to have performed ten horse-sacrifices. The Maghas and the Lichchhavi rulers of Nepal are also called *mahārāja*. As these kings were powerful independent sovereigns and ruled about the same time as, and even both before and after, Gupta and Ghaṭotkacha, we cannot regard the latter as feudatories simply because they are styled *mahārāja*. As we do not know for certain where these Gupta kings ruled, and whether there was any paramount sovereign to whom they might have owed allegiance, we must leave undecided the question whether the first two Gupta kings were really independent rulers or feudatory chieftains.

Some scholars have traced a reference to the first Gupta king in a work of the famous Chinese pilgrim I-tsing known as *Kau-fa-kao-sang-chuen* in which he gives an account of 56 Buddhist pilgrims who visited India in the second half of the seventh century A.D. In connection with one of them, a Korean monk named Hwui Lun *alias* Prajñāvarmā, I-tsing refers to a ruined Buddhist establishment called the China Temple and adds: 'Tradition says that formerly a *mahārāja* called Che-li-ki-to built this temple for the use of the Chinese priests. . . and gave them the land and the revenues of about twenty villages as an endowment. This occurred some 500 years ago.'[10]

As the Chinese form Che-li-ki-to is an exact rendering of Śrīgupta, some scholars have identified him with the first Gupta king. But others reject this identification on chronological grounds. As the memoir of I-tsing was composed about A.D. 691-92[11] and the king flourished about 500 years before that time, his reign-period falls about the close of the second century A.D. On the other hand, as the accession of Chandra-gupta I is usually placed in A.D. 320, his grandfather Gupta cannot be placed so early. This argument is not, however, so convincing as it appears to be. In the first place it is not certain, as we shall see later, that Chandra-gupta ascended the throne in A.D. 320, and his accession has been actually placed by some scholars in the first decade of the fourth century A.D.[12] Secondly, as the great French Sinologist Chavannes has pointed out,[13] the statement of I-tsing about 500 years need not be taken too literally, and may really imply only a date between 400 and 500 years, which would justify us in placing Śrīgupta about the middle of the third century A.D., or even somewhat later. It is, therefore, possible to agree with Allan that 'considering

10 Beal, *Life of Hiuen Tsang*, xxxvi-xxxvii; Chavannes, *Mémoires sur les Religieux éminents*, etc. par I-tsing, 82-83.

11 Takakusu, *I-tsing*, liv.

12 *EHI*, 279.

13 *Op. cit.*, 82-83, n. 2.

the lapse of time and the fact that the Chinese pilgrim gives the statement on the authority of a "tradition handed down from ancient times by old men", there seems no reason to doubt the identification on chronological grounds.'[14]

If we accept this identification we may also form some idea of the locality over which king Gupta ruled. It is obvious from the statement of I-tsing quoted above that the China Temple, endowed by Śrī-Gupta, was situated in his own territory. Fortunately, I-tsing gives full details about the direction and distance between the Mahābodhi Temple at Gayā and the Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no Temple near which the China Temple was situated. According to calculations made by Dr. D. C. Ganguly, the China Temple must be located somewhere in the modern district of Murshidabad in Bengal.[15] This conclusion is strikingly confirmed by the fact that in an illustrated Cambridge manuscript dated A.D. 1015, there is a picture of a *stūpa* with the label 'Mṛigasthāpana *stūpa* of Varendra'. As Foucher has pointed out, Mṛigasthāpana is the Indian original of I-tsing's Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no, and as this was in Varendra, the China Temple near it might well have been located in the district of Murshidabad which is adjacent to it, on the other side of the river Gaṅgā or Padmā.[16] It is not also unlikely that the China Temple might have been in Varendra, in the Rajshahi district on the left bank of the river, for this would fit in equally well with the distance and directions given by I-tsing.

But although we may provisionally accept the hypothesis that Gupta, the founder of the imperial Gupta family, ruled over parts of Bengal, it is difficult to accept, without further evidence, Dr. Ganguly's view that the early home of the imperial Guptas is to be located in Bengal and not in Magadha.[17] For we do not know how far his kingdom extended in the west, and it might very well have included a part of Magadha, even if not the whole of it. In such

14 *CGD,* XV. It is interesting to note in this connection that some scholars who object to Allan's identification on chronological grounds easily accept, without demur, Mihirakula of Hiuan Tsang to be the chief of that name who lived *c.* A.D. 530, although Hiuan Tsang and other Chinese writers represent him to have flourished *many centuries* before the seventh century A.D. Hiuan Tsang's error is less excusable than that of I-tsing. For, to represent a king, who lived four hundred years ago, as having flourished, in round number, about five hundred years before his time, is less unusual than to speak of a man, who died hardly a century before, as having lived many centuries ago.

15 *IHQ,* XIV, 532. Mr. Jagannath's attempt (*IHQ,* XXII, 28 ff.) to locate the Chinese Temple in Benares district is vitiated by his reliance upon an old and obsolete translation of Beal in preference to more recent and revised translation by the same scholar and Chavannes (*op. cit.*).

16 For a full discussion cf. *History of Ancient Bengal* by R. C. Majumdar (*HABM*), p. 37.

17 *IHQ,* XIV, 535.

a case, we cannot decide whether Magadha was the original home of the Guptas who later extended their power to Bengal, or vice versa.

On the other hand, it should be remembered that even if the proposed identification of Gupta with the king mentioned by I-tsing be not accepted, his statement proves that a king bearing a name ending in Gupta ruled over a portion of Bengal not long before the time of Gupta. In the absence of a more positive and definite knowledge about the origin of the imperial Guptas, it would not be unreasonable to hold that they were connected in some way with the Gupta king mentioned by I-tsing and probably acquired the territories ruled over by him.[18] In other words, we may regard it as very probable that the dominions of the founder of the imperial Gupta family comprised a part of Bengal corresponding to Murshidabad or Rajshahi district and its immediate neighbourhood. On the other hand, it has been very plausibly argued, on the basis of the provenance of the coins and early inscriptions of the Guptas that their original home was in Eastern U.P.[19]

Reference has been made to two seals with the name Gupta. These might have belonged to the founder of the imperial Gupta family, but we cannot be sure of this. Beyond these doubtful identifications we possess no information concerning him. Of his son Ghaṭotkacha we know even less. But there is one interesting fact about him to which attention may be drawn. In an inscription of Skanda-gupta found at Rewa, the genealogy of the Gupta family begins with Ghaṭotkacha and not with his father Gupta.[20] The same thing occurs in two Vākāṭaka records which trace the genealogy of Queen Prabhāvatī-guptā, daughter of Chandra-gupta II.[21] As none of these is an official Gupta record we cannot attach much importance to the omission of Gupta's name. It cannot be surely due to ignorance and may be

18 Some scholars hold that Śrīgupta mentioned by I-tsing was an earlier member of the imperial Gupta family, probably a grandfather of Gupta. Cf. *PHAI*, 443-44; *QJMS*, XXIV, 220; *JIH*, VI. Supplement, 7.

19 S. R. Goyal, *A History of the Imperial Guptas*, 41-52. The fallacy of his argument is established by the fact that all the known inscriptions of Aśoka have been found far away from Bihar, which must have been the homeland of the Mauryas.

20 A short account of the record was published in the Summary of Papers, *PAIOC*, XII, 39. It begins with Ghaṭotkacha and calls the family *'tadvaṁśa'* (his family) (and not *sadvaṁśa* as stated in the summary).

21 The genealogy begins with *'Guptānāmādirājo'* in the Riddhapur Plate (*JPASB*, XX, 58) and *'Guptādirājo'* in the Poona plates (*EI*, XV, 41), followed by the name of *'Mahārāja* Ghaṭotkacha'. The editors of both the plates have translated it as 'Ghaṭotkacha, who had Gupta as the first king'. The editor of the second plate, which was published earlier, remarks that the 'construction is very faulty'. The expression in the first plate leaves no doubt that what was intended to convey in both these records was that Ghaṭotkacha was the first king of the Gupta family.

due to inadvertence. But if the omission is deliberate we can only conclude that posterity regarded Ghaṭotkacha as a more important figure than his father. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri has made an ingenious suggestion that some stories in the *Mahābhārata,* describing the sins and iniquities of Ghaṭotkacha, the son of the demoness Hiḍimbā by Bhīma, were omitted in the final redaction of the epic during the Gupta age out of deference to the Gupta king Ghaṭotkacha.[22]

The Guptas probably belonged to the Dhāraṇa-*gotra.* For this is given as the *gotra* of the daughter of Chandra-gupta II,[23] and as we know that her husband had a different *gotra,* we may reasonably trace it to her father's family. But Dr. Raychaudhuri's suggested inference from this that the Guptas may have been related to Queen Dhāriṇī, the chief consort of Agnimitra,[24] does not seem to be very plausible.

III. CHANDRA-GUPTA I

As already noted above, Chandra-gupta, the son of Ghaṭotkacha, was a more powerful ruler than his two predecessors, and founded the greatness of his family. This is not only indicated by the higher title *mahārājādhirāja* bestowed upon him in the official records as opposed to *mahārāja* given to his two predecessors, but also by a number of gold coins issued by him. From the conventional genealogy repeated in the Gupta records, we know that Chandra-gupta married Kumāradevī belonging to the Lichchhavi clan, and the issue of this marriage was Samudra-gupta. It is noteworthy that even in the long genealogical accounts of the last Gupta emperors, which embrace ten generations of kings, there is no reference to the paternal family of any of the queens, of whom eight are named, with the single exception of Kumāradevī. It is obvious, therefore, that the family attached a great deal of importance to this marriage alliance.

The precise nature of this importance is difficult to decide. V. A. Smith held that 'Kumāradevī evidently brought to her husband as her dowry valuable influence, which in the course of a few years secured to him a paramount position in Magadha and the neighbouring countries.'[25] Allan doubts the correctness of this view, and holds that the pride with which the Guptas refer to the matrimonial alliance with the Lichchhavis 'was probably due rather to the ancient lineage of the Lichchhavis than to any material advantages gained by this alliance'.[26]

22 *Calcutta Review,* 1934, 213; *K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume,* 31.
23 Cf. the two plates mentioned in n. 21 earlier.
24 *PHAI,* 443 n.
25 *EHI,* 279.
26 *CGD,* XIX.

These two opinions may be regarded as typical of the general views which attribute the emphasis laid upon the Lichchhavi connection to either political power or social prestige which Kumāradevī brought to her husband. The gold coins of Chandra-gupta, however, distinctly weigh the balance in favour of the former view. These coins have on the obverse the names and portraits of Chandra-gupta and Kumāradevī, and on the reverse the figure of goddess Lakshmī with the legend *Lichchhavayaḥ* (the Lichchhavis). The grounds on which Allan contended that these were issued by Samudra-gupta to commemorate the marriage of his parents are no longer held valid, and scholars now regard them as issues of the reign of Chandra-gupta I.[27] The legend on the reverse shows that the Lichchhavis still regarded themselves as the ruling power, and the figure of Kumāradevī on the obverse was obviously intended to emphasize the fact that she ruled in her own right as the sovereign of the Lichchhavis. These gold coins may, therefore, be taken to imply either that the marriage of Chandra-gupta and Kumāradevī brought about a union of the two separate States over which they ruled, or that Chandra-gupta, by his marriage, became the ruler of the Lichchhavis, along with his queen Kumāradevī. As pointed out by Altekar,[28] the reign of William III and Mary in England furnishes an analogy of the latter. The gold coins show that the Lichchhavis maintained their individuality throughout the reign of Chandra-gupta I, and it was not till the reign of his son Samudra-gupta, who inherited the two States from his two parents, that the fiction of a separate Lichchhavi kingdom was dissolved and the two dominions were merged into one State.

Read in this context the expression *Lichchhavi-dauhitra* (daughter's son of the Lichchhavi), applied to Samudra-gupta, may be regarded as merely a counterpart of the gold coins, both serving to emphasize the contribution made by the Lichchhavis to the development of the political power, or the extension of dominions, of the Guptas. Besides, it is worth remembering that in spite of their ancient lineage the Lichchhavis were regarded as *Vrātya,* i.e. unorthodox and impure, in the *Manu-saṃhitā.*[29] It is therefore very unlikely that the Guptas would mention, with pride, the matrimonial alliance with the Lichchhavis with a view to increasing their social prestige. We may therefore accept with a tolerable degree of certainty that Chandra-gupta added to his own dominions those of his wife, and the sove-

27 Altekar in *JRASBL,* III, *Num. Suppl.,* XLVIII, 105 ff; S. K. Aiyangar in *JIH,* VI, Suppl., 10 ff.

28 *Op. cit.*

29 X, 20, 22.

reignty over these two States passed to his son by the right of inheritance. This satisfactorily explains the reference to the Lichchhavis in the coins and inscriptions and the assumption of the higher title of *Mahārājādhirāja* by Chandra-gupta I.

So far we are on tolerably sure ground. But uncertainty hangs over the very important question of locating these two States. V. A. Smith's view,[30] that the Lichchhavis were ruling in Pāṭaliputra at the time of Kumāradevī's marriage with Chandra-gupta, is not supported by any satisfactory evidence. A Nepal inscription of the eighth century A.D. records a tradition that a Lichchhavi king Supushpa 'was born a king' at Pushpapura which was another name of Pāṭaliputra.[31] But that record also adds that 38 kings ruled between him and Mānadeva who flourished in the fifth-sixth century A.D.[32] The date of Supushpa, even assuming his existence on the authority of such a late tradition, would thus be nearly eight hundred years anterior to the time of Kumāradevī, and it would not be safe to conclude that the Lichchhavis were masters of Pāṭaliputra at the time of her marriage with Chandra-gupta.

Similarly Allan's view that the first Gupta king ruled over Pāṭaliputra and the neighbouring territory in Magadha is palpably wrong. It is evidently based on I-tsing's statement[33] referred to above, and Allan was entirely mistaken in supposing that the temple and the lands granted by Gupta to the Chinese pilgrims lay in Magadha. As we have seen above, they must be located in that part of Bengal which is now represented by Murshidabad or Rajshahi district, and we may presume that the original Gupta kingdom comprised this territory. But beyond this we cannot say anything.

As regards the Lichchhavis we know definitely that they lived in Vaiśālī in the time of Gautama Buddha, and ruled in the Nepal valley in the early centuries of the Christian era. As Samudra-gupta's record refers to Nepāla as a subordinate State, it may be presumed that the Lichchhavis over whom his parents ruled did not live there. We may, therefore, provisionally locate these Lichchhavis in Vaiśālī and the neighbouring territory, the only other region associated with this clan in known history.

It is possible that the Gupta and Lichchhavi kingdoms, which were ultimately amalgamated, were originally adjacent States. In that case we may presume that the original Gupta territory embraced

30 *EHI*, 279.
31 *HNI*, 268-69; *IA*, IX, 178.
32 *JAS*, Vol. I, 1959, pp. 47-49.
33 *CGD*, XIX.

a part of Bengal and Bihar. But no definite conclusion is possible in the present state of our knowledge.

Nor is it easy to form an idea of the extent of the dominions over which Chandra-gupta I ruled. Some have tried to deduce it from the territories in possession of his son Samudra-gupta before he launched his aggressive military campaigns. Unfortunately, as will be shown in the next chapter, it is not easy to form an accurate idea of these, as many of the conquests of that great emperor cannot be exactly located. It has been held, for example, that N. Bengal formed part of the dominions of Chandra-gupta I, for it is not included among the conquests of Samudra-gupta as recorded in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.[34] But many of the kings, referred to in that record as having been exterminated by Samudra-gupta, are quite unknown to us, and the ruler of N. Bengal might have been one of them, as a ruler of S. Bengal almost certainly was. All that we can reasonably infer is that Chandra-gupta's dominions must have been sufficiently large to justify his assumption of the imperial title *Mahārājādhirāja*, and to enable his son to begin that career of conquest which pushed its limits up to the Chambal on the west and beyond the Vindhyas, along the fringe of the eastern Deccan plateau, right up to the valley of the Krishṇā, if not still further south. Such extensive conquests are no doubt mainly due to an uncommon military genius, but they also generally imply possession of resources, which, in the present state of our knowledge, constitute the fairest measure of the extent of territory ruled over by Chandra-gupta I. It almost certainly included the whole of Bihar and a part of Bengal, and the inclusion of a portion of U.P. is highly probable. But any attempt to define it more precisely is beset with difficulties.

Scholars generally accept the view that Chandra-gupta I ruled over Sāketa (Avadh), Prayāga (Allahabad), and Magadha (South Bihar), on the basis of a verse in *Vāyu Purāṇa*.[35] But there are certain difficulties. In the first place the reading of the Purāṇic passage is far from certain. The corresponding passage in the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* omits Sāketa and makes Guptas and Magadhas rule jointly over the rest of the territory. The text of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* either omits the word Gupta or uses it in the sense of 'protected' and not as a name of a dynasty. What is worse, even some copies of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* substitute 'Guhya', '*sapta*' or 'Maṇidhānyaka' for Gupta.

Secondly, the passage in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* merely says that 'kings born of the Gupta race (*Gupta-vaṃśajāḥ*) will enjoy those territories',

34 *HNI*, 12-13.

35 For the Purāṇic verse with its different readings cf. *DKA*, 53 and *IHQ*, XXI, 141.

and no individual ruler is mentioned. It has been argued that if the account were compiled later than Chandra-gupta's reign, 'it is hardly credible that it would have omitted to notice Samudra-gupta's conquests'.[36] This cannot be regarded as a fair conclusion, and others have argued with equal cogency that the Purāṇic passage reflects the political status of Gupta and his ancestors[37] or of the decadent Gupta empire, say in the first half of the sixth century A.D.

Chandra-gupta I has also been represented by some to have extended his conquests beyond the Sindhu river on the strength of the Meharauli Inscription.[38] But 'King Chandra' mentioned in this record is most probably to be identified with Chandra-gupta II, and not Chandra-gupta I.[39]

An ingenious attempt has been made to treat the drama *Kaumudī-mahotsava* as a source of history for Chandra-gupta I.[40] The plot of this drama turns round the story of Chaṇḍa-sena who was adopted as son by king Sundara-varman of Magadha and also appointed his commander-in-chief. The cursed Chaṇḍa-sena, however, allies himself with the barbarian (*mlechchha*) Lichchhavis, lays siege to Pāṭaliputra, defeats and kills Sundara-varman, and becomes king of Magadha. Some scholars have identified this Chaṇḍa-sena with Chandra-gupta I and have built up a romantic history of the period. It is forgotten, however, that according to epigraphic evidence, Chandra-gupta's father and grandfather were both kings and this hardly applies to Chaṇḍa-sena who was an adopted son of Sundara-varman. Besides, Chaṇḍa-sena is called a Kāraskara, which was a low community, and the Lichchhavis are described as *mlechchhas.* Neither of these descriptions agrees with what we know about them. On the whole the reconstruction of the history of the early Guptas on the basis of the drama *Kaumudī-mahotsava* cannot be taken very seriously. The same thing may be said of a more recent attempt[41] to write the history of the Guptas from details supplied by *Bhavishyottara-Purāṇa,* for the passage in question, if not the whole work,

36 *DKA,* XII; *CGD,* XIX; *PHAI,* 445-46.

37 *JIH,* VI, Suppl., 7-8.

38 *HNI,* 13; *JIH,* VI, Suppl., 14 ff.

39 This point will be discussed later.

40 An extensive literature has grown on this topic, but it is unnecessary to refer to it in detail. The theory, originally propounded by K. P. Jayaswal (*ABORI,* XII, 50; *JBORS,* XIX, 113) is supported by Pires (*The Maukharis,* 17, 23-41) and Dasaratha Sarma (*JBORS,* XXI, 77; XXII, 275). But it has been sufficiently refuted by Winternitz (*Aiyangar Comm. Vol.,* 359-62), K. Chattopadhyaya (*IHQ,* XIV, 582), Jagannath (*Thomas Comm. Vol.,* 115), and K. Raghavacharyulu (*JAHRS,* VI, 39). The theory has been justly rejected or ignored by most other scholars (*IC,* IX, 100, 232).

41 *JBRS,* XXX, 1.

bears the stamp of a modern forgery.[42]

We know so very little about Chandra-gupta I that it is idle to speculate on his early career. There is nothing, for example, to support the view that he liberated Magadha from the yoke of the hated Scythians who had been oppressing the people for three centuries.[43]

To the same category belongs the view that Chandra-gupta founded the era, known as Gupta era, to commemorate his coronation. We may regard it as more or less certain that the epoch of this era is either 20 December A.D. 318 or 26 February A.D. 320, the discrepancy being due to two different methods of calculation. But in spite of the almost unanimous support of scholars[44] it is difficult to accept, as an established fact, that the year marks the accession or coronation of Chandra-gupta I. The only argument in favour of it is the fact that Chandra-gupta was the first to assume the title *mahārājādhirāja* and was evidently a powerful king who laid the foundation of the greatness of his family. On the other hand it was his son Samudra-gupta who is definitely known to have established a vast empire by his conquests, and it is at least equally likely that the era was founded by him. Reference may be made in support of this view to two copper-plate grants of Samudra-gupta dated in years 5 and 9. It is true that some scholars regard both these grants as forgeries, but there seems to be no valid ground to regard the earlier one as such. Further, even if these were forged at a later date, which cannot be

42 *IHQ*, XX, 345; *PIHC*, VII, 119.

43 *AIG*, 3, 5.

44 So far as I know, in addition to the views expressed in *NHIP*, VI, 131-32, Dr. D. C. Sircar is the only scholar who has ventured to suggest that Samudra-gupta and not Chandra-gupta I founded the Gupta era. (*Bhāratavarsha*, a Bengali monthly, 1348 (B.S.) Part II, 397; 1349 (B.S.), II, 193, 262.)

Goyal (*op. cit.*, 106) suggests that the era was founded by Chandra-gupta II, 'who evidently reckoned it from some earlier important event of the history of his dynasty'. It is far more likely that the regnal year of Samudra-gupta continued to be used in the later epigraphs of the dynasty, and this led to the adoption of an era. An analogy is afforded by the Kushāṇa inscriptions.

On the other hand, Goyal has very plausibly argued that as Chandra-gupta II was the *Dūtaka* of the Nālandā Grant of Year 5, he was old enough to take an active part in the administration, and could not, therefore, have been less than 20 years of age at that time, i.e., in A.D. 324. This is hardly likely in view of the fact that he was alive in A.D. 413. It may, of course, be argued that Chandra-gupta's name was wrongly added as *Dūtaka* when the Grant was rewritten, or that *Dūtaka* might sometimes be an honorary title like the Prince of Wales and does not necessarily indicate actual participation in the administration of the empire. But in any case, it is a strong, though not conclusive, argument against simultaneously holding the two views, namely, (1) that the Nālandā copper-plate was a genuine copy of the original Grant issued in the year 5 of Samudra-gupta's reign, and (2) that the foundation of the Gupta era commemorates, or marks the beginning of, Samudra-gupta's reign.

very remote, the writer probably copied an old grant or knew enough of Samudra-gupta to believe that he was reigning in the year 5 of the era. In that case it is more probable that Samudra-gupta founded the era rather than that his father died within five years of his coronation.

Thus in spite of various theories and speculations that have gathered round his name, Chandra-gupta I remains a dim figure in history, for, besides his ancestry and marriage we know very little about him that can be regarded as certain. The only other thing that we can fairly infer is that he extended his ancestral dominions to an extent which justified him in assuming the higher title of *mahārājādhirāja* and there is hardly any doubt that his marriage with a Lichchhavi princess enabled him to do this. The kingdom over which he ruled, by his own right as well as that of his wife, probably included the major part of Bihar, if not the whole of it, and also a portion of Bengal and of Uttar Pradesh. He certainly ruled in the first quarter of the fourth century A.D., but the actual date of his accession and the duration of his reign are equally unknown.

CHAPTER THREE

SAMUDRA-GUPTA AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

I. ACCESSION AND EARLY CAREER OF SAMUDRA-GUPTA

CHANDRA-GUPTA I WAS SUCCEEDED by his son Samudra-gupta. By the fortunate discovery of a single record (No. 3) we have come to know more of this great king than perhaps any other ruler in Ancient India, with the solitary exception of Aśoka. This record is engraved on a stone pillar of Aśoka which now stands in a conspicuous position inside the fort at Allahabad. As it contains a short Aśoka edict addressed to his officials (*Mahāmātras*) at Kauśāmbī, it is generally supposed that the pillar was originally set up in that famous ancient city which is now represented by the village of Kosam, on the left bank of the Yamunā (Jumna), about 28 miles west by south from Allahabad. As Hiuan Tsang makes no mention of this column in his account of Prayāga (Allahabad) it is supposed that the pillar had not been removed to its present site then, and was still at Kauśāmbī when the record of Samudra-gupta was engraved on it. On the other hand some scholars have shown good grounds for the belief that the pillar is still in the original site where it was set up by Aśoka.[1] The location of the pillar at the time of Samudra-gupta is of some importance, as it is a very natural supposition that the place where such an important official record was set up must have been one of the most important cities, if not the capital, of the empire.

The record belongs to the class known as *praśasti* or eulogy and was composed by Harisheṇa who held no less than three important posts, including that of the foreign minister.[2] It is natural that such a court official would exaggerate the royal virtues, and his statements should not therefore be taken at their face value. But even making

1 *JRAS*, 1935, p. 697.

2 *Sāndhi-vigrahika*. The exact significance of the other two posts, *Kumārāmātya* and *Daṇḍanāyaka*, is not known and will be discussed in connection with the administrative system. Harisheṇa is also called *Khādyaṭapākika*, a word not met with elsewhere. It has been explained as 'head of the superintendents of the royal kitchen' *SI*, 260, n. 1).

due allowance for this, his long composition, in mixed prose and verse and in a highflown literary style, is of great value as it gives us a number of specific details concerning the career and personality of the great emperor.

Unfortunately, the upper part of the inscription, containing the first four lines, has suffered very badly, partly owing to the peeling off of the surface of the stone and partly on account of the vicious habit of tourists inscribing their own names. Probably this portion contained only a general encomium, the concluding portion of which, referring to his accomplishments as a poet, is preserved in lines 5 and 6. This probably formed the third verse, to which reference will be made later.[3]

The next verse describes an important historical event, the full significance of which has been generally missed on account of the defective translation by Fleet. This verse tells us that in the full royal *durbar* the father of Samudra-gupta scanned him with eyes laden with tears of joy and sparkling with emotion, and, with the hairs of his body standing erect through affection, embraced him, exclaiming: 'Come, come!, rule this whole world.' All the while Samudra-gupta was being looked at with melancholy faces by others of equal birth, and the courtiers were heaving sighs of relief.[4]

The verse thus describes a memorable scene in the royal court. For some reason or other, the king had decided to nominate his successor. It raised expectations in the hearts of many members of the royal family including his sons, and caused great excitement in public mind. Before a full session of the royal court, meeting in a highly tense atmosphere, the king announced in a somewhat dramatic manner that Samudra-gupta would henceforth rule the kingdom. The

3 For an attempt to reconstruct this part of the inscription, cf. *ABORI*, Vol. XXXIX, 34-45.

4 Fleet translated the passage as follows:

'Who, being looked at (*with envy*) by the faces, melancholy (*through the rejection of themselves*), of others of equal birth, while the attendants of the court breathed forth deep sighs (*of happiness*), was bidden by (*his*) father—who, exclaiming "Verily (*he is*) worthy", embraced (*him*) with the hairs of (*his*) body standing erect (*through pleasure*) (*and thus*) indicative of (*his*) sentiments, and scanned (*him*) with an eye turning round and round in affection, (*and*) laden with tears (*of joy*), (*and*) perceptive of (*his noble*) nature—(*to govern of a surety*) the whole world' (*CII*, III, 11-12).

Dr. Chhabra has argued, and in my opinion very rightly, that the words read by Fleet as *āryyo h = ity* (verily he is worthy) are really *ehy = eh = ity* and suggests the following translation of the passage, which seems to be preferable:

'With hair erect, indicating affection, when father embraced him, saying: "Come, come!", those present in the court felt exhilarated, while the rival claimants looked at him with sullen faces. Then, his eyes laden with tears and sparkling with emotion, father cast a piercing glance at him and thus spake to him: "Protect thou the whole earth"' (*IC*, XIV, 146).

royal declaration naturally caused keen disappointment to the other sons and rival claimants to the throne, and they looked melancholy. According to Harishena the choice gave great satisfaction to the members of the court, but this statement of the royal official cannot be taken at its face value.

It is generally held on the strength of the above passage that Chandra-gupta I selected Samudra-gupta as his heir apparent. But the words actually used—protect thou the whole earth (*pāhy-evam-urvīm-iti*)—undoubtedly imply that the king abdicated the throne in favour of his son, and the vivid description of the poet is more in keeping with this view.[5] The very fact that Harishena thought fit to record the event, many years after it had taken place, invests it with an unusual degree of importance such as we can hardly attach to a formal act of nominating a successor, unless some extraordinary features marked the political condition of the time. Perhaps the fears of a disputed succession were disturbing the peace of the kingdom, or creating party factions, and the king wanted to put a stop to all speculations and intrigues by an open declaration of his choice of a successor.[6] Even then the actual words put in the mouth of the king were probably hardly appropriate to the occasion.

On the whole it is fair to conclude that whether Chandra-gupta I abdicated the throne in favour of Samudra-gupta as seems very likely, or merely nominated him as his successor, he was faced by difficulties real or apprehended. Although Harishena does not clearly refer to them, we may perhaps detect some reference to political troubles at the commencement of the reign of Samudra-gupta in the verse which immediately follows. The stone here is unfortunately damaged, and a good many words having been lost, it is impossible to be sure of the interpretation. But it clearly refers to some (*kechit*) who were attracted to him by his unusual (lit. superhuman) deeds (of valour ?), and to others (*kechit*) who submitted (lit. fell at his feet *charaṇam-upāgata*) after being afflicted by his prowess (*viryy-ottapta*). The next verse, equally mutilated, refers at the beginning to wrong-doers who were defeated by him in battle and, after a gap, there is an allusion to 'good feelings'. and 'repentance'; but the connection between the two parts is missing. It is possible to construe these two verses as referring to an outbreak of rebellion which was subdued by Samudra-

5 Dr. Chhabra strongly supports this view after an elaborate discussion of the whole question (*op. cit.*, 149).

6 It is tempting to suggest that perhaps Chandra-gupta I wanted to unite his own kingdom with that of Kumāradevī, by nominating her son, in preference to his sons by other queens, some of whom may have been senior to Samudra-gupta. This would give rise to a situation of first-rate political importance such as is hinted at in the text.

gupta, partly by fighting and partly by conciliatory measure or diplomacy. But as no complete sense of the verses can be made out, it is better not to form any definite conclusion on the basis of a speculative interpretation. But some scholars have even proceeded further. It has been suggested, for example, that Samudra-gupta's brothers rose in rebellion against him and put Kācha, the eldest of them, on the throne.[7] The name of Kācha has been found only on a number of gold coins which closely resemble those of Samudra-gupta. Numismatists are almost unanimous in attributing these coins to Samudra-gupta,[8] though the possibility is not altogether excluded that they were issued by a king who flourished just before or after him. We may or may not accept Fleet's view that Kācha was 'a personal and less formal name of Samudra-gupta',[9] or Allan's suggestion that 'it was the original name of the emperor who took the name Samudra-gupta in allusion to his conquests',[10] but it is difficult to regard Kācha as a rebellious brother of Samudra-gupta without some positive evidence.[11] A more recent attempt to identify him with Rāma-gupta, the presumed son and successor of Samudra-gupta, will be discussed in due course.

II. CONQUESTS OF SAMUDRA-GUPTA

The Allahabad *praśasti* refers to the various conquests of Samudra-gupta. They appear to have been arranged in geographical rather than chronological order, and it is difficult to identify the kings and localities mentioned in this connection. It is not possible, therefore, to give a connected and comprehensive historical account of the eventful career of the great emperor and of his wonderful military campaigns as these succeeded one another. All that we can do is to narrate the campaigns in the order in which these are recorded in the *praśasti.*

The seventh verse, which is the first to refer to his conquests, is badly mutilated. The extant portion mentions, at the beginning, that by his unaided prowess he uprooted Achyuta, Nāgasena, and probably one or more other kings whose names are now lost on account of the surface of the stone having been peeled off. As the letter 'g' is still legible immediately after Nāgasena, it has been plausibly suggested that it might have been Gaṇapati-nāga, who is mentioned in a later

7 *ABORI,* IX, 83; *JBRS,* XXXIV, 24.

8 Allan, *CGD,* xxxiii, lxxiv; IHQ, 1959, p. 333. For the contrary view, cf. *JNSI,* XI, 33.

9 *CII,* III, 27.

10 *Op. cit.,* xxxiv.

11 Goyal has offered elaborate arguments in support of this view but they rest on very weak grounds and are too hypothetical to be accepted as sober history (*op. cit.,* 125 ff., 191 ff.).

part of the record along with Achyuta, Nāgasena, and several other kings as having been uprooted by Samudra-gupta. In any case it is reasonable to presume, that for some reason or other, reference is made here to Samudra-gupta's victory over two or three kings which is repeated later in a fuller account. It may be therefore presumed that he conquered them before others. Fortunately both the kings can be located with a tolerable degree of certainty. Achyuta is known from his coins to have ruled in Ahichhatra (Ramnagar in Bareilly district), and Nāgasena is usually identified with the king of that name who is stated in the *Harsha-charita* to have ruled in Padmāvatī, a famous city now represented by Padam Pawaya, 25 miles north-east of Narwar, in Madhya Pradesh. If these were the first conquests of Samudra-gupta, his father's kingdom must have comprised a large part of the U.P.

The second part of verse 7 seems to imply that while Samudra-gupta was playing (or taking his pleasure) at the city called Pushpa, his army captured one who was born in the Kota family. The Kotas probably ruled somewhere in the upper Gangetic valley, as their coins have been found in E. Panjab and Delhi. The city called Pushpa most probably refers either to Pāṭaliputra or to Kānyakubja (Kanauj) both of which had another name Pushpapura. It is difficult to construe the relation between this city and the defeat of the Kotas and the other kings mentioned in the verse. It may be that the victory over them enabled Samudra-gupta to take pleasure in the city, i.e. to capture it. But it is also not unlikely that what the poet intended to convey was that compared with the defeat of Achyuta and Nāgasena, where the king had to lead the campaign in person, the victory over the Kotas, ending with the capture of their king, was a minor affair, left entirely to the army, while the king himself was staying at ease in a distant city. In the first case Pushpapura may be identified with Kānyakubja, which was evidently included in the realm of one of the kings mentioned in the verse. In the second case we may take Pushpapura to be the capital city of Pāṭaliputra[12] where the emperor was pursuing his normal vocation while his army was engaged in the distant expedition against the Kotas.[13]

The next or the eighth verse contains only a general encomium of Samudra-gupta. Then follows the prose portion which begins with a general statement of his skill in a hundred battles causing a hundred wounds inflicted all over his body by various weapons of

12 Nothing is definitely known about the capital of the Gupta empire. For an interesting discussion on this point, cf. Goyal (*op. cit.*, 210 ff.).

13 It is difficult to accept S. K. Aiyangar's view that Achyuta, Nāgasena and the Kota king made a combined attack against Pāṭaliputra, the capital of Samudra-gupta (*JIH*, VI, Supplement, 27).

which ten are specifically named. The poet then gives a long list of rulers, peoples and States[14] conquered by Samudra-gupta or voluntarily submitting to him. These are divided into four classes according to their degrees of subjection or the measures adopted by the emperor after his victory over them.

To the first division belong all the kings of the South (*sarva-Dakshiṇāpatha-rāja*) of whom twelve are specifically named. These were captured and then liberated,[15] presumably on condition of acknowledging his authority, if not also of paying tribute, though neither of these is actually mentioned.

The next class comprises nine rulers of Āryāvarta (N. India) who were violently exterminated. It is obvious that their kingdoms were annexed and formed integral parts of the Gupta empire. That is perhaps the reason why the names of the kings alone are given without any reference to the States over which they ruled, for these had ceased to exist, perhaps long ago.

Under the third category are mentioned five kingdoms, and nine tribal States that paid taxes, obeyed orders, and performed obeisance in person to the great emperor. It is expressly said that the five kingdoms formed the frontier (*pratyanta*) of the empire.[16] Probably the same thing was true also of the other nine States.[17]

Last of all are mentioned a few independent or semi-independent principalities lying in remote corners, beyond the States of the third category. Their exact relationship with the Gupta emperor is difficult to determine, and will be discussed later.

III. THE EMPIRE OF SAMUDRA-GUPTA

It is quite clear from the above that the Gupta empire consisted of a central zone in North India under the direct rule of the emperor, and a number of tributary States, both monarchical and non-monarchical. If the rulers mentioned in the second category could be identified or at least localised, we could have some definite idea

14 These have been enumerated, and their identifications discussed in detail in the Appendix to this chapter.

15 The actual words are *grahaṇa-moksh-ānugraha*. I have followed Fleet's translation. Mr. Ramadas takes the three words as applicable to different States and translates the passage as 'capturing some, showing favour to some, and liberating some who had been under subjection' (*IHQ*, I, 688). The policy of capturing kings and then liberating them is fairly well known, cf. *Raghuvaṃśa*, IV, 43. It does not imply a humiliating defeat of Samudra-gupta as Dubreuil has assumed (*AHD*, 60-61).

16 But cf. Fleet, in *CII*, III, 14, n. 1.

17 *EHI*, 285-86. Otherwise we have to presume that independent States intervened between the Gupta empire and their tributary States to which no reference has been made. This seems hardly likely when even the States further beyond these tributary States have been mentioned.

of the central zone. Of these, besides Achyuta and Nāgasena discussed above, Gaṇapati-nāga probably ruled in Vidiśā (Bhilsa) or Mathurā, and Chandra-varman in the Bankura district of West Bengal. Nothing definite is known of the rest.

But although we cannot define the boundary of the central zone by means of any positive evidence, we can indirectly form a fair idea of it from the position of the tributary States which formed its frontier. Fortunately many of these, if not all, can be located with a tolerable degree of certainty. Of the five kingdoms expressly mentioned as frontier, Samataṭa, Kāmarūpa, and Nepāla undoubtedly denote, respectively, Lower Bengal, Assam and Nepal, and the fourth, Ḍavāka, was probably situated in Nowgong district in Assam. Among the tribal States mentioned in the same category, the Mādrakas occupied the territory between the Ravi and the Chenab with Sialkot as their capital, and the Yaudheyas ruled over an extensive region in the eastern and south-eastern Panjab between Bahawalpur and Bharatpur. Further south, the Mālavas ruled in south-east Rājputāna, in the region represented by Kotah and Mewar. Among the other tribes the Sanakānīkas can be definitely located in the neighbourhood of Bhilsa, and a few others also probably belonged to the same region.

We may thus reasonably conclude that the Gupta emperor had under his direct administration an extensive area which reached the boundaries of East Bengal and Assam in the east, and the foothills of the Himalayas in the north. In the west it extended up to the Panjab and probably included its eastern districts between Lahore and Karnal. A straight line drawn from Karnal to Bhilsa would roughly represent the western boundary.[18]

In the south, an inscription found at Eran (No. 4) proves that the Saugor district in M.P. was included in Samudra-gupta's dominions.[19] He is also said, in the Allahabad *praśasti,* to have subdued all the Āṭavika *rājas* or kings of forest countries which roughly denote the

18 According to V. A. Smith 'the dominion under the direct government of Samudra-gupta extended from the Hooghly on the east to the Yamunā and the Chambal on the west'. This leaves out the E. Panjab which is not known to have belonged either to the Mādrakas or to the Yaudheyas, the only two tributary States in this region, and therefore presumably formed an integral part of the kingdom of Samudra-gupta. The same thing may be said of Mathurā to the west of the Yamunā if, as suggested above, it was the capital of Gaṇapati-nāga. In the east also, the Brahmaputra, rather than the Hooghly, should be regarded as the boundary, as Kāmarūpa was a tributary kingdom on the frontier. The boundary of Samataṭa, another frontier kingdom, must also have been far to the east of the Hooghly river.

19 This follows from the expression *sva-bhoga-nagar-Airikiṇa-pradeśa* which Fleet translates as 'in a place in Airikiṇa in the city of his own enjoyment'. This is generally taken to refer to Samudra-gupta. Mr. D. Sharma interprets the whole inscription in a

tracts, full of hills and dense jungles, extending eastwards from Jabalpur to Chota-Nagpur.[20]

It is evidently through these forest kingdoms that Samudra-gupta proceeded on his *digvijaya*, or campaign of victory, in Dakshiṇāpatha. Of the twelve States conquered by him in this region, Kosala undoubtedly denotes Mahākosala, comprising the modern districts of Bilaspur, Raipur and Sambalpur. Among the others, we can definitely locate three as their capital cities Pishṭapura, Veṅgī, and Kāñchī, correspond respectively to Pithapuram (E. Godavari district), Vegi or Peddavegi (7 miles north of Ellore in the W. Godavari district), and Kañchipuram (Chingleput district). The uncertainty of identification in respect of the other kingdoms makes it impossible to indicate precisely either the route followed by him between Mahākosala and the eastern coastal region, or the extreme limit of his advance in the south. We have to deal only with probabilities which will be discussed in the Appendix of this chapter.

Among the rulers mentioned, Vishṇugopa of Kāñchī and Hastivarman of Veṅgī are known from other sources. The former belonged to the well known Pallava dynasty, and the latter to the Śālaṅkāyana dynasty. This external corroboration and the specific mention of the names of rulers and States leave no doubt that Samudra-gupta's victorious military campaign which carried him as far south as Kāñchī, and perhaps even beyond it, was undoubtedly a historical fact. It was no doubt a very ambitious undertaking and its success speaks highly of the wonderful skill in organizing transport and communication. But there is no justification, on that ground, to doubt its authenticity. Dubreuil has advanced the view that Samudra-gupta only proceeded up to the Kṛishṇā river, and having been defeated there by a confederacy of the 'kings of the

different way and makes it a record of a feudatory of Samudra-gupta (*JIH*, XIV, 27). His main argument, however, falls to the ground if we supply the letters '*tāte*' at the beginning of line 13 and read the word as *tātena* as Dr. D. C. Sircar has done (*SI*, 261).

20 The copper-plates of the Parivrājaka *Mahārāja* Samkshobha mention him as ruling Ḍabhālā together with all the country included in the eighteen forest kingdoms (*s-āshṭādaś-āṭavī-rājy- ābhyantaram Ḍabhā(?hā)lā-rājyam*) (Fleet, 114; *EI*, VIII, 284 ff.). As Ḍabhālā undoubtedly denotes the region round Jabalpur, and the eighteen forest kingdoms must have been contiguous to it, they may be taken to denote the tracts full of hills and jungles in the direction of Chhattisgarh (cf. *EI*, VIII, 286). The Āṭavika *rājas* conquered by Samudra-gupta may be identified with the rulers of the eighteen forest kingdoms. As reference is made to their *kings*, though reduced to the position of servants (*parichārakīkṛita*), they were probably feudatory States. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri says that 'the Āṭavika *rājyas* undoubtedly included the realm of Ālavaka (Ghazipur)', but cites no evidence. If Ghazipur near Benares is meant it will be too far to the north (*PHAI*, 451).

eastern Deccan, abandoned the conquests he had made along the coast of Orissa and returned home'.[21] This is in flat contradiction to the definite statement in the Allahabad *praśasti* and has no positive evidence to support it.[22] A royal *praśasti* may undoubtedly be guilty of exaggeration, but we ought not, without sufficient reason, ignore its clear and categorical statements, far less accept, as truth, the exact reverse of what it says.

It is significant that a clear distinction is emphasized in the attitude of the emperor towards the vanquished kings of Āryāvarta (North) and Dākshiṇātya (South). Samudra-gupta uprooted (*un-mīl*) the former, i.e. annexed their dominions, while he reinstated the latter in their kingdoms. Evidently he had enough political insight to realize that it was easier to conquer distant countries than to keep a permanent hold upon them. He therefore did not attempt the almost superhuman task of uprooting these rulers or even keeping them in permanent subjection. Instead, he attached them to the empire by his generous attitude in setting them free (*mokshānugraha*). According to the *praśasti* this enhanced his power (*pratāpa*) and prosperity (*mahā-bhāgya*) which probably means that he realized large sums from them and made them agree to pay tribute or give military assistance in times of need. But unfortunately the poet does not clearly refer to the terms on which the rulers got back their kingdoms.

The crushing defeat inflicted upon a number of kings in Northern India and the victorious campaign in the south must have enhanced the military reputation of Samudra-gupta to such an extent that kings and peoples, both far and near, were anxious to secure his good will and cultivate his friendship. It is therefore quite likely that some of the tributary States, mentioned in the third category, submitted to him without any actual fight. For the same reason, the States of the fourth category, viz the Kushāṇa and Śaka chiefs of the Panjab and Western India and the inhabitants of Ceylon and other islands also did various services to please the emperor.

IV. THE IMPERIAL POLICY

In order to understand clearly the imperial policy of Samudra-gupta it is necessary to define, as precisely as possible, the exact services rendered by the last two categories of States. The task is rendered somewhat difficult by the uncertain meaning of some of the words used in the *praśasti*, but it is possible to get at least a general idea. In addition to the payment of tributes of all kinds

21 *AHD*, 60-61.
22 See the last sentence in n. 15 above.

(*sarva-kara-dāna*), the States of the third category had to perform three kinds of service, viz *ājñākaraṇa*, *praṇāma* and *āgamana*. The first and the last evidently mean execution of specific orders given from time to time, and personal attendance at the imperial court when required. As to the second it means salutation by bowing one's head, but if this ordinary meaning were intended it would not probably have been mentioned as a distinct item. For such a form of common courtesy, to be shown to a suzerain, hardly deserves specific mention. Probably some special kind of salutation by the feudatories, emphasizing their acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the emperor, was introduced by the Guptas in their *durbar* ceremonials, and this is signified by the term *praṇāma*.

It is more difficult to understand the corresponding phraseology applied to the fourth category of States. The actual words are: *ātmanivedana-kanyopāyanadāna-garutmadaṅka-svavishayabhukti-śāsana-yāchana*. The first, *ātmanivedana*, literally means 'offering themselves', and evidently means personal attendance in court. The second, *kanyopāyanadāna*, literally means presenting (*upāyana*) unmarried girls and giving (*dāna*) them in marriage. The latter undoubtedly refers to the daughters of the rulers, or at least their near relations. It is difficult to think of their sending such girls to the suzerains for any other objects than marriage. But as *upāyana* is clearly distinguished from *dāna* we can only construe the first as presenting pretty girls of easy virtue, which was probably customary in those days.[23]

The rest of the compound phrase may be interpreted as 'the soliciting of charters, bearing the Garuḍa seal, for the government of one's own territory'.[24] In other words, these rulers were confirmed in the possession of their kingdoms by charters issued by the Gupta emperors. But this meaning cannot be regarded as certain. Some have taken *Garutmad-aṅka* to mean the Gupta coins bearing the figure of Garuḍa. In that case the phrase would mean that the rulers asked for royal charters for two purposes, viz (1) to use the Gupta gold currency in their territories and (2) to govern their kingdoms.[25] In support of this view it has been pointed out that coins with the name of Samudra-gupta and his son were actually used by the Kushāṇa chiefs of the Western Panjab. These, however, bear no figures of Garuḍa. Allan is definitely of opinion that *Garutmad-aṅka* does not refer to any coin, and points out that 'with the exception of certain silver coins, there are no coins on which the

23 It is mentioned in the *Periplus* (sec. 49) that beautiful maidens were regularly imported into Barygaza for the harem of the king.

24 *CGD*, xxiv-xxv; *SI*, 258, n. 3.

25 *JBORS*, XVIII, 207; XIX, 145.

bird Garuḍa is prominent enough for the coin to be described as having the Garuḍa for its type'.[26]

But whatever we may think of this difference, the two undeniable factors, viz that these rulers had to ask for charters to enjoy their territories, and also to attend the court in person, imply a considerable authority exercised by Samudra-gupta over these far-off potentates. It is possible that the court-poet has somewhat exaggerated the position of the Gupta emperor in respect of them. It is quite likely that the Śaka and Kushāṇa chiefs living on the frontier of the Gupta empire, and even the rulers of Ceylon and other islands, thought it politic to cultivate friendship with the mighty ruler Samudra-gupta, by personal visits, matrimonial relations, and occasional presents. But it is difficult to believe that they ruled their kingdoms as fiefs of the Gupta empire conferred upon them by royal charters. On the other hand, the Kushāṇa type of coins with the name of Samudra-gupta indicate a sort of real suzerainty, and the statement of the *praśasti* may be substantially correct so far at least as the Kushāṇa and Śaka States are concerned.

But the case of distant Ceylon seems to stand on a different footing. Fortunately, here, too, we have evidence that the claims advanced in the *praśasti* were not altogether without any basis. We learn from a Chinese account[27] that two Buddhist monks sent to Buddha-Gayā (Bodhgayā) by Meghavarṇa, king of Ceylon, complained to him on their return that the Ceylonese pilgrims to that place suffered a great deal for want of suitable residential accommodation. To remove this difficulty, Meghavarṇa sent an embassy to Samudra-gupta with rich presents in order to secure permission for building a monastery and a rest-house at Buddha-Gayā. The permission being granted, Meghavarṇa built a splendid monastery there. Hiuan Tsang, who visited it three hundred years later, describes it as follows: 'Its buildings formed six courts, with terraces and halls of three storeys, enclosed by walls between 30 and 40 ft. high; the sculpture and painting were perfect.'[28] Hiuan Tsang also records the tradition of its origin. We are told that the Ceylonese king 'gave in tribute to the king of India all the jewels of his country' in order to secure permission for building the monastery. Possibly the author of the Allahabad *praśasti*, like Hiuan Tsang, regarded the rich presents sent by the king of Ceylon as tribute, construed the embassy as *ātmanivedana* (presenting oneself), and the granting of lands at Buddha-Gayā as 'enjoyment of territories by royal charter'.

26 *CGD*, xxv, n. 1.
27 *JA*, 1900, pp. 316, 401; *IA*, 1902, p. 194.
28 *HTW*, II, 136.

The dwellers of other islands, which are coupled with Ceylon in the same category, probably refer to the Indian colonies in the East Indies (cf. Ch. XXXI). It is possible that they sent embassies and kept on friendly relations with the great emperor of their motherland.

We are now in a position to review in broad outline the career of the great emperor[29] and the extent and nature of the mighty empire founded by him.

Being called to the throne by the choice of his father, Samudra-gupta was probably faced with a difficult situation. But he proved himself worthy of the confidence his father had reposed in him. By his wise policy and vigour of action he maintained peace within his dominions and consolidated his resources. He was then engaged in a series of wars and probably his whole life was spent in military campaigns. His first campaigns were presumably against the kings of Āryāvarta, for without settling affairs nearer home he could not have possibly undertaken military campaigns in distant lands. He defeated no less than nine kings of Āryāvarta. Whether he met them singly or in one or more combinations, we cannot say, but his victory over them all was complete, and he annexed their kingdoms to his own dominion. Although we cannot definitely locate most of these kingdoms, we may say in a general way, that Samudra-gupta's dominion, after the incorporation of these territories extended, roughly speaking, from the Ravi to the Brahmaputra river, and from the foot-hills of the Himalayas to the Vindhyas. Towards the south-west the boundary of his kingdom followed an imaginary line drawn from Karnal to Bhilsa. Samudra-gupta then undertook a military campaign to the Deccan. Passing through Central India and Eastern M.P. he reached the eastern coast, and then proceeded along the coastal region as far as Kāñchīpuram, if not further south. In course of this campaign he defeated and captured no less than twelve kings. But he adopted a different policy towards them. He not only set them at liberty but also reinstated them in their own kingdoms, on conditions which are not specified but almost certainly included acknowledgement of his suzerainty.

Samudra-gupta now occupied a position of unquestioned supremacy, and many kingdoms and tribal States on his frontier acknowledged his suzerainty. They retained autonomy in internal administration, but had to pay tribute, attend at court, and render other stipulated

29 The various theories of Jayaswal about the career and military campaigns of Samudra-gupta, like the rest of his history of the Guptas, are too conjectural and full of wild guesses to be seriously considered. For Jayaswal's views, cf. his article in *JBORS*, XIX, which was later separately published under the title *History of India* A.D. 150 to 350, Part II.

services. Some of them were probably conquered by force, but many perhaps voluntarily offered their submission to escape the horrors of war and a worse fate. These States, which formed almost a ring round the dominion directly administered by Samudra-gupta, were the natural frontiers of Āryāvarta on the north, east, and south. Even the Śaka and Kushāṇa chiefs, lying beyond this area on the west and south-west, realized the necessity of keeping on good terms with the mighty emperor by personal visits, matrimonial alliances, and sending presents, and some of them had to tacitly acknowledge his suzerainty by inscribing his name on the coins issued by them. The name and fame of Samudra-gupta spread beyond the limits of India. The king of Ceylon sent him an embassy with rich presents and received from him, as a favour, lands near Buddha-Gayā for building a monastery. Even the dwellers of more distant islands are included among those who were submissive and friendly to Samudra-gupta and received favours from him. These were probably the Indian colonists who had set up kingdoms in Indo-China and the East Indies and kept themselves in touch with their motherland. As the poet has justly remarked, thus did Samudra-gupta, the first soldier of his age (*apratiratha*), 'bind the whole world by the amplitude of the vigour of his arm', and no wonder that his fame 'pervaded the whole world' and even ascended to the abode of the lord of the gods.[30]

The great empire built up by Samudra-gupta testifies not only to his great skill as a general but also to wise statesmanship of a very high order. His numerous victories and the march of his army through the long coastal regions in the Deccan give clear evidence of his extraordinary military talents and organizing ability. V. A. Smith has called him the Napoleon of India and, for all we know, he perhaps fully deserves this title. The imperial policy laid down by him and followed by his successors evinces a clear grasp of the political situation in India. For nearly five hundred years after the fall of the Maurya empire, India suffered from political disintegration and the foreign invasions encouraged by it. Samudra-gupta set himself to the great task of liberating India from the yoke of foreign rule and restoring her political solidarity. But he proceeded very cautiously in both these respects. He realized that it was impossible to bring the whole of India under one rule all at once, and it was wiser to proceed step by step. So he first consolidated his direct authority over a central

30 This expression was taken by Fleet to mean that Samudra-gupta was dead when the record was composed. But according to Sanskrit poets even the fame of living men reaches the heaven, and so such an expression does not necessarily imply the death of the man. Since this was pointed out by Bühler, Fleet's view of the posthumous character of the Allahabad Inscription is no longer accepted by any (cf. *IHQ*, XXIV, 104).

zone and left the surrounding States in a position which would not impair their authority over internal administration but put a stop to their mutual dissensions which were eating into the vitals of the political life of India as a whole. He had shown enough of his mailed fist to these kings, both of Northern and Southern India, to keep their aggressive spirit in check. At the same time he left them enough power and freedom, and took sufficient conciliatory measures, to prevent them from rising in rebellion out of sheer desperation. Similarly he humbled the power and pride of the Śakas and the Kushāṇas who represented the last remnants of foreign domination in India; but he did not make an all-out effort to exterminate their rule. There is no doubt, however, that he intended a gradual tightening of his policy in both these directions. His successor followed up his policy by incorporating some of the tributary States within his dominion and giving the death-blow to the Śaka power in India. Although details are lacking, we know that before a century had passed since the death of Samudra-gupta, the writs of the Gupta emperors were obeyed by their governors from the Himalaya mountains to the Narmadā river and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian sea. The Śakas and the Kushāṇas had vanished from the political arena, and even the redoubtable Hūṇas found the doors of India barred against them. The imperial policy of Samudra-gupta was also carried to the central Deccan. There the grand-daughter of a Gupta emperor was ruling over the large kingdom of the Vākāṭakas. Other matrimonial relations paved the way for the extension of the empire further south, as far as Karṇāṭa or the Kanarese country in South India. The Gupta empire came to an end before the completion of this process, but it redounds to the great credit of Samudra-gupta that it was he who laid down the statesman-like policy which was steadily pursued by his successors for over a century, and resulted in the growth of a mighty empire such as India had never seen since the days of the Mauryas.

V. THE PERSONALITY OF SAMUDRA-GUPTA

Samudra-gupta was not merely a consummate general and a far-sighted statesman. He had in addition remarkable qualities of head and heart to which the poet has made copious reference.[31] Some of his statements are no doubt merely vague general praises such as occur in all royal *praśastis*. But others seem to refer to some special characteristics which distinguished the personality of Samudra-gupta. We are told that the great emperor was endowed with poetical skill and musical accomplishments of a high order. Reference has been

31 Dr. R. K. Mookerji has collected together 'glimpses of the many-sided genius and character of Samudra-gupta given by his coins and inscriptions' (*IC*, IX, 177).

made to his poetic abilities in three different places. First, we are told in verse 3 (l. 6) that he earned fame among the learned by his many poetical works. Again, in verse 8, poetry is included among his various excellences.[32] Lastly, in line 27, he is said to have 'established his title of "king of poets" by various poetical compositions that were fit to be the means of subsistence of learned people'.[33] These repeated references leave no doubt that the emperor had composed some poetical works none of which has, alas, survived.

Fortunately we have more positive evidence of the musical accomplishments of the emperor, referred to by the poet. This is furnished by a type of gold coins in which the king is represented as seated on a high-backed couch, playing on a *vīṇā* (lyre or lute) which lies on his knees. As will be shown later, the coins of the early Gupta emperors represent their figures in various forms and poses taken from real life. The unconventional representation of Samudra-gupta in scanty clothes playing on a *vīṇā* must be taken to indicate his musical talents. This unexpected confirmation of the writer of the *praśasti* seems also to invest with some authenticity his other statements, particularly his assertion about the emperor's poetical ability.

Undue stress need not be laid on the general virtues and accomplishments of the emperor mentioned by the poet, such as wisdom and high intellect, knowledge of scriptures, kindness, specially to the poor and the helpless, and tenderness of heart. He is said to be a shining example of philanthropy.[34] His charity is referred to in some specific forms. First, he liberally patronized the poets and thereby gave the lie direct to the general notion 'that there was an eternal discord between good poetry and material prosperity (*śrī*)'.[35] Secondly, reference is made to the reinstatement of many royal families who had lost their kingdoms (l. 23) and the restoration of wealth to the kings defeated by him (l. 26). The former need not necessarily refer to the kings, such as those of the South, who were defeated and then restored to their kingdoms. It is not unlikely that after conquering a kingdom he placed on the throne a member of the old royal family who had been dispossessed of it long ago. This is a well known policy of State that has been followed by conquerors in all ages and countries.[36]

32 The translation of these two verses by Dr. Raghavan (*JOR*, XVI, 159) brings out the point very clearly.

33 This is Fleet's translation. But Prof. Jagannath suggests a slightly different meaning (*BV*, IX, 277).

34 This is how Dr. Mookerji (*op. cit.*) renders the words *samiddhasya vigrahavato lokānugrahasya.*

35 This seems to me to be the real meaning of the first part of v. 3, but it has been translated differently by Fleet and Mookerji (*op. cit.*).

36 Cf. *Manu*, VII, 202, and the policy followed by the British in many Indian States.

Lastly, he is said to have given many hundreds of thousands of cows, evidently as gifts to Brāhmaṇas, on the occasion of religious observances.

Only one very doubtful instance of Samudra-gupta's patronage of literary men may be referred to. According to the great rhetorician Vāmana, Chandra-prakāśa, son of Chandra-gupta, was a great patron of letters and appointed the famous Buddhist scholar Vasubandhu as his minister. Unfortunately the date of Vasubandhu is not definitely known. But if he died about the middle of the fourth century A.D., as is generally held, Chandra-prakāśa may be taken as referring to Samudra-gupta. But the whole question is beset with difficulties and uncertainties.[37] Samudra-gupta was a great follower of the Brahmanical religion. In two of his copper-plates (Nos. 1 & 2) he is referred to as '*parama-Bhāgavata*', showing that he was a devotee of Vishṇu. But these copper-plates are generally regarded as spurious. The same copper-plates refer to him as having performed the Aśvamedha sacrifice 'that had been in abeyance for a long time'.[38] This statement is repeated in the records of the later Gupta emperors, and is strikingly confirmed by a series of gold coins which represent on one side a horse before a sacrificial post, and on the other side a lady, presumably the chief queen, with the legend *Aśvamedha-parākramaḥ*. While there is thus no doubt that Samudra-gupta performed the Aśvamedha sacrifice, it is somewhat curious that no reference is made to it in the Allahabad *praśasti* which gives such a detailed account of his reign. It has been suggested that the sacrifice was performed after that *praśasti* was composed. We should, however, remember that the first four lines of the inscription are lost, and it is not unlikely that they contained a reference to it.

The claim that Samudra-gupta restored this politico-religious ceremony after it had long been out of use cannot be regarded as strictly correct. For we have epigraphic evidence that it was performed by several other kings not long before his time.[39] But there was perhaps some justification for the claim. In the first place, there is no record to show that the Aśvamedha sacrifice was performed in Magadha or even in Eastern India since the days of Pushyamitra who flourished about five hundred years before Samudra-gupta.

37 An extensive literature has grown on this problem which has been fully discussed in *EHI*, 346 ff. For other traditions associating Vasubandhu with the Guptas, cf. *NHIP*, VI, 156n; Goyal, *op. cit.*, 214-15. But some scholars hold that the reference in Vāmana's passage is to Subandhu and not Vasubandhu, and that Chandra-gupta refers to the first Maurya king (*IHQ*, XIX, 69).

38 Some take the expression to mean 'elaborate' or 'protracted', *JNSI*, XIX, Part II, 14 ff.; Essays presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, II, 10 ff.

39 For the actual instances, cf. *JIH*, XIII, 35; *PHAI*, 461; *IC*, I, 117.

Secondly, though kings of the Vākāṭaka, Bhāraśiva, and other dynasties, specially of the Deccan and South India, performed the ceremony, it was more of a religious nature, and could not possibly have been preceded by conquests on a large scale or open challenges to the monarchs of India or of an extensive part of it, which formed the very essence of this time-honoured ceremony as described in the Epics. Samudra-gupta was the first historical king of India, with perhaps the single exception of Pushyamitra, who had the right to perform it in accordance with the well-known epic traditions and the injunctions of the Śruti. Whether he actually let loose a horse which roamed at large, throwing an open challenge to the crowned heads of India, we cannot definitely say, though the gold coins with the figure of the sacrificial horse make it very likely. But what is important to note is that of all these reputed performers of the sacrifice he alone was in a position to do this. He achieved the reality which made the symbol immaterial. But in other cases, though the symbol might have been used, it lacked any basis of reality. Hence the proud claim that Samudra-gupta revived the Aśvamedha sacrifice after a long time cannot be regarded as altogether without foundation.[40]

The Aśvamedha sacrifice performed by Samudra-gupta was not only a symbol of his imperial power, but also of the dominant position regained by Brahmanical religion after it had been temporarily eclipsed by heterodox religions like Buddhism and Jainism. The Gupta Age marks the end of one epoch and the beginning of another in the history of Indian religion. Henceforth Buddhism and Jainism steadily lost ground, and a new form of Brahmanical religion grew more and more powerful. This ultimately developed into modern Hinduism, while Buddhism altogether lost its separate entity, and Jainism was confined to a small community in Western India. This revolutionary change, of which the full history will be detailed elsewhere, may be said to have been heralded by the Aśvamedha sacrifice performed by Samudra-gupta.

It is sad to think that we know so little of the great monarch who looms so large in Indian history. It is a strange irony of fate that India forgot this great figure and even his very name was lost in oblivion. But while neither tradition nor literature in India has preserved any reminiscence of this remarkable personality, there is a solitary reference to him in a Javanese book of fables.[41] But for the record engraved on the Allahabad pillar, this great hero and emperor and a versatile genius, like many others, would have been

40 *IC*, I, 117-18. For different views regarding the nature of Aśvamedha sacrifice, and particularly whether it implied wide conquests and an imperial status, cf. *IC*, I, 115-18, 311, 637 (n. 1), 704; II, 140, 789; III, 759, 763.

41 *IHQ*, IX, 930.

at best only a name to us, known from his coins and a few records. His case, therefore, admirably illustrates the triumph of archaeology, and the role it has played in Indian history.

The gold coins[42] issued by Samudra-gupta are of a large number of varieties. The portraits engraved on them give us some idea of the physical appearance of the great emperor and some of his personal habits and activities. In some types he is represented as holding a bow and arrow, sometimes shooting at a tiger, or armed with an axe and a sword. In others we find him sprinkling incense on an altar or playing on a lyre. The coins which thus mark both his peaceful pursuits and martial activities bear appropriate legends. The king is also exhibited in a variety of dresses suitable to the occasion. Usually he wears a close-fitting cap, coat and trousers, ear-rings, necklace (single or double), bracelets and armlets. But when playing on the lyre he wears only a piece of waist-cloth, his bare body showing robust physique with strong muscular arms and a fully developed chest. The fine artistic coins also reflect the aesthetic spirit which heralded a new age in the history of Indian art.

On the whole these coins enable us to visualize the great and powerful king whose picture is so admirably drawn in the Allahabad *praśasti*. Before our eyes stands the robust figure of the king whose physical vigour was fully matched by his intellectual and cultural pursuits. We seem to see before us the creator of the Golden Age in which India attained the full stature of her growth in moral, intellectual, cultural and material spheres—an age which has been the ideal and despair of succeeding generations.

It is perhaps the brilliance of the reign of Samudra-gupta that earned for him the title Vikramāditya[43] which was later assumed by several of his successors. They were probably inspired by the name and fame of an earlier king who, according to Indian tradition, flourished in Ujjayinī and founded the era, known as Vikrama *Saṁvat*, in 57 B.C., to commemorate his victory over the Śakas. Some scholars, however, do not believe in the existence of this king and regard the whole legend as having grown round the Gupta emperors.

It was not without some reason that the contemporaries of Samudra-gupta regarded him as an incarnation of god on earth. He is not only regarded as equal to the gods Kuvera, Varuṇa, Indra and Yama, but is also described as 'a superman, beyond comprehension', and 'only a man by form in having to act according to the customs and conventions governing this life',[44] (but otherwise) a god dwell-

42 Cf. Allan, *CGD*, 1-23; also Ch. XXXII of this volume.

43 This may be reasonably inferred from the title *Śrī Vikramaḥ* found on a coin of *Samudra-gupta* (*JNSI*, V, 136), but some scholars do not accept this view.

44 This is the translation by Mr. Mookerji (*op. cit.*) of the phrases *purushasy-*

ing on the earth. This is almost an exact echo of the view expressed in the famous code of Law, *Manu-Smṛiti,* that the king equals the eight *dikpālas* and 'is a great deity in human form'.[45] Whatever may be the origin of this doctrine, its final triumph and great popularity was perhaps not a little due to the personality of Samudra-gupta and the succession of able rulers who followed him.

As the theory of the divine origin of kings was expounded in *Manu-Smṛiti,* it may be presumed to have been already accepted in the Gupta court, and we need not discern anything more than an expression of this theory in Harisheṇa's comparison of Samudra-gupta with the four gods. It has been suggested, however, with some degree of plausibility, that as the four gods were guardians of the four directions, the comparison of Samudra-gupta with them possibly refers not only to his conquests in all directions, but to his possession of immense riches (like Kuvera), suzerainty over the seas (Varuṇa being the sea-god), the spread of the fame to celestial regions (of Indra), and his extirpation of various kings (like Yama, the god of death).[46]

VI. THE DATE OF SAMUDRA-GUPTA

The view generally held that Samudra-gupta ascended the throne about A.D. 335 rests upon the belief that the Gupta Era, beginning in A.D. 320, commemorates the accession of his father Chandra-gupta I. As already pointed out, there are no adequate grounds for this belief; on the other hand there are at least two important considerations in favour of the view that Samudra-gupta founded the Gupta Era. In the first place his wide conquests and the Aśvamedha sacrifice fully entitled him to found an era, whereas such justification is lacking in the case of his father, who probably ruled only jointly with his wife over at least a part of his dominions which still theoretically maintained a separate entity. Secondly, two copper-plate grants (Nos. 1 & 2) of Samudra-gupta have been found at Nālandā and Gayā, dated respectively in the years 5 and 9. Some scholars regard them as spurious, but this view has been challenged by others who regard both of them, or at least the earlier one, as genuine.[47] Even those who doubt its genuineness admit the proba-

āchintyasya and *loka-samaya-kkriy-ānuvidhāna-mātra-mānushasya.* Fleet renders the latter somewhat differently.

45 Cf. *Manu,* VII, 8. Manu also says that the king was created out of the particles of the eight *dikpālas,* including the four gods mentioned above, and equals them (VII, 4-7).

46 *PHAI,* 461. It has been suggested also that the poet meant to convey that Samudra-gupta was the equal of god Kuvera in wealth, Varuṇa in justice, Indra in power, and was invincible like Yama (*IC,* IX, 178).

47 The question has been fully discussed by the author in *IC,* XI, 225-30.

bility that the date of the Nālandā grant was based on a correct knowledge of facts.[48]

We may thus reasonably assume that the Nālandā Grant was issued by Samudra-gupta in year 5. If the Gupta Era had been founded by Chandra-gupta I, this year must be referred to that era, for once it was instituted the kings continued the reckoning in that era and did not use their own regnal years, as is proved by the mode of dating the subsequent records. It would then follow that Chandra-gupta I died before the year 5 of this era.

This conclusion cannot be accepted unless we hold that Chandra-gupta founded the era long after his accession and marriage with Kumāradevī. For we cannot believe that Samudra-gupta was a boy of less than five when he was selected by his father, out of a number of rival candidates, to rule the kingdom, and was regarded as fit for this responsible task. V. A. Smith holds the view that Chandra-gupta I ascended the throne some time before A.D. 308 when he married Kumāradevī, and established the era on the occasion of his formal consecration or coronation.[49] This view has been opposed by Fleet, Allan and others who hold that 'the era must date from the first year of his reign'.[50] In any case it seems reasonable to conclude that the era was started either from the beginning of Chandra-gupta's reign, or from the time when his power was increased by his marriage alliance with the Lichchhavis. There is no ground for the belief that the era was started long after both these incidents and at some indeterminate period during the reign of Chandra-gupta I. It is therefore extremely unlikely that if Chandra-gupta I died less than five years after he had founded the era, his son Samudra-gupta had grown old enough to be thought fit by him to shoulder the heavy responsibilities of the growing kingdom.

If, therefore, the Nālandā Grant, or at least its date, be accepted as genuine, we are bound to presume that it was Samudra-gupta, and not his father, who founded the era. In other words the accession of Samudra-gupta in 320 marks the beginning of the era.[51] The only objection that has been urged against this view is that it gives a total reign of 136 years to three generations of kings from Samudra-gupta to his grandson Kumāra-gupta, who died in year

48 *PHAI*, 447.

49 *EHI*, 279-80.

50 Allan, *CGD*, xx. But Allan contradicts himself when he says later (xxxii): 'If we allow a reign of twenty-five years to Chandra-gupta I from the death of his father, the date of the accession of Samudra-gupta may be placed in A.D. 335.'

51 After I had stated this view (*NHIP*, VI, 159), I found that it was also suggested by Dr. D. C. Sircar in a Bengali magazine *Bhāratavarsha* (1348 B.S., Part II, 397, 1349, Part II, 193, 262). But cf. the last para of note 44 (p. 15).

136 of that era. But though somewhat unusual it cannot be regarded as impossible, and in any case it increases the total reign-periods of the three kings only by five years.

If we disregard the evidence of the Nālandā plate on account of its spurious character and take the Gupta Era as marking the accession of Chandra-gupta I, it is reasonable to assume that Samudra-gupta ascended the throne at about A.D. 350 when he was probably about 25 years of age. An earlier age is unlikely in view of his selection by his father, and a later age is rendered less probable by the long reigns of his son and grandson. On the whole the date A.D. 350 seems to be more likely than A.D. 335, generally adopted as the year of his accession. As noted above, Samudra-gupta was a contemporary of Meghavarṇa, king of Ceylon. Unfortunately the date of the latter is not known with certainty. According to the traditional reckoning adopted in Ceylon for Buddha's death, Meghavarṇa's reign covers the period from A.D. 304 to 332. But some modern scholars like Geiger have adopted a modified chronology according to which Meghavarṇa ruled from A.D. 352-79. If we adopt the former view we should put the accession of Samudra-gupta in A.D. 320 and regard him as the founder of the Gupta Era. The latter view, though not incompatible with this theory, would equally support the date A.D. 350, suggested for Samudra-gupta's accession.

The end of Samudra-gupta's reign is also equally uncertain. For although it is definitely known that his son Chandra-gupta II was on the throne in A.D. 380, and probably commenced his reign in A.D. 376, we are not sure whether there was an intervening reign between the two. This question will be dealt with more fully in the next chapter, and for the present we can only conclude that Samudra-gupta died in or before A.D. 376.

Appendix to Chapter Three

THE IDENTIFICATION OF RULERS AND LOCALITIES MENTIONED IN THE ALLAHABAD *PRAŚASTI*[52]

I. THE TWELVE RULERS OF DAKSHIṆĀPATHA

1. Mahendra of Kosala: As already pointed out above, Kosala denotes Mahākosala or Dakshiṇa-Kosala comprising the eastern and southern parts of M.P., more particularly the Raipur, Drug, Bilaspur, and Sambalpur districts, and some States of the Eastern States Agency like Raigarh, Sarangarh and Patna.[53] Mahendra has been identified with Mahendrāditya of the Nala dynasty.[54]

2. Vyāghrarāja of Mahākāntāra: This ruler was identified by Bh. with Vyāghra, father of Jayanātha of the Uchchakalpa dynasty whose records, dated 174 and 177, have been found in Nagod State and Jabalpur district. If the years be referred to the Kalachuri Era, we get the date A.D. 423-26 for Jayanātha, and his father may well have been a contemporary of Samudra-gupta. Bh. further identifies him with Vyāghradeva mentioned as a feudatory of the Vākāṭaka king Pṛithivīsheṇa in a stone inscription found at Nachne-ki-tala in Ajaygadh State.[55] If this Vākāṭaka king is taken to be Pṛithivīsheṇa I, the identification is possible. But some scholars identify him with Pṛithivīsheṇa II who flourished more than a century later. Apart

52 The identification has been discussed by many scholars of whom a few are noted below together with the abbreviations by which they are referred to in this Appendix and its footnotes.

(1) Fleet—*CII*, III, (1-17, footnotes); *JRAS*, 1898, p. 369.
(2) Bhandarkar—*IHQ*, I, 250 (Bh).
(3) G. Ramadas—*IHQ*, I, 679.
(4) Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri—*PHAI*, 449 (HC).
(5) V. A. Smith—*JRAS*, 1897, p. 27 (Smith).
(6) S. K. Aiyangar—*JIH*, VI, Suppl., 27 (S. K.).
(7) K. P. Jayaswal—*History of India*, A.D. 150-350, 132 ff. (Jayaswal).
(8) R. Sathianathaier—*Studies in the Ancient History of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam* (R.S.).
(9) Allan—*CGD*, xxi ff.
(10) K. N. Dikshit—*PAIOC*, I, CXXIV.
(11) G. Jouveau-Dubreuil—*AHD*, 58-61.
(12) C. C. Das Gupta—*J. Bh. Or. Res. Institute*, Vol. XXXIX, 136-41.
(13) S. R. Goyal—*History of the Imperial Guptas*, 128-35, 139-68, 196-200.

53 *BDCRI*, VIII, 1; *EI*, X, 26.

54 *IHQ*, 1961, p. 23.

55 *GH*, III, 233; *JRAS* (1914), 317.

from this, the main objection against the proposed identification is the fact that this Vyāghradeva ruled in a region which cannot be regarded as a part of Dakshiṇāpatha where Vyāghrarāja ruled. It has accordingly been suggested that Vyāghrarāja ruled in Jeypore forest in Orissa. This region is referred to as Mahāvana in an old inscription, and Mahāvana can be regarded as a synonym of Mahākāntāra over which Vyāghrarāja ruled. Jayaswal, however, identifies Mahākāntāra with Kanker and Bastar. Ramadas locates Mahākāntāra in the Agency tract of Ganjam to the west of Mahendra hill.

If the identification of Vyāghrarāja with the Vākāṭaka feudatory Vyāghradeva be maintained, we must hold that Samudra-gupta came into conflict with the Vākāṭakas, of which there is no other evidence, and conquered their territories in Central India which henceforth formed part of the Gupta empire.

3. Maṇṭarāja of Kurala (Kaurālaka): Fleet suggested the emendation Kairālaka for Kaurālaka which would give the name of the kingdom as Kerala, the well known region of South India. This identification, however, is improbable, as Kerala is too far south. Bh. places Kurala in Sonpur territory in M.P. on the authority of a passage in the *Pavanadūta* which locates Kurala near Yayātinagara on the Mahānadī (near Sonpur). R.S. identifies Kurala with Cherla in Nugur *tāluk,* E. Godavari district. On the other hand Kielhorn takes the word Kurala as it is, and identifies it with the well-known Kolleru lake between the Godāvarī and the Kṛishṇā. But this has been rightly objected to on the ground that in that case Kurala would be situated in Veṅgī which is separately mentioned. Dr. Barnett proposes to identify Kurala with one of the villages called Korāḍa in South India.[56] Ramadas locates Kurala in the plain country to the north-east of the Mahendra hill.

4. Mahendra-giri of Pishṭapura: Pishṭapura can be definitely identified with modern Pithapuram in the E. Godavari district. As regards the name of the king, Fleet took it to be simply Mahendra and regarded 'giri' as a part of the following word Kauṭṭūraka. But this view is no longer held.[57]

5. Svāmidatta of Koṭṭūra: Fleet's identification of Koṭṭūra with Kottur-Pollachi in the Coimbatore district can no longer be upheld. His other identification with Kailāsa-Koṭṭa is less objectionable. M. Jouveau-Dubreuil's identification[58] with Kothoor, about 4 miles south-west of Tekkali in the Ganjam district, is more probable. But H.C. has pointed out that there are other places called Koṭṭura,

56 *Calcutta Review,* Feb. 1924, p. 253 note.
57 Cf. *S. K. Aiyangar Com. Vol.,* 155; *IC,* III, 230.
58 *AHD,* 58-60.

notably one at the foot of the hills in the Vizagapatam district. R.S. identifies it with Koṭṭūru near Tuni in the E. Godavari district, and Saletore with Koṭṭara in the Kudligi *tāluk,* Bellary district.[59]. Ramadas joins Mahendragiri with Koṭṭūraka and takes the expression to mean Koṭṭūra near Mahendragiri or the well-known Mahendra hills. He points out that there are about a dozen villages called Koṭṭura in the Ganjam district. He further combines 4 and 5 together and interprets it as 'Svāmidatta who had his seat at Pishṭapura and at Koṭṭūra near Mahendragiri'. This, originally suggested by Fleet, is hardly likely.

6. Damana of Eraṇḍapalla: Fleet's identification of Eraṇḍapalla with Eraṇḍol in the Khandesh district can no longer be upheld. There can be hardly any doubt that it is identical with Eraṇḍapali, mentioned in the Siddhāntam plates of Devendravarman, king of Kaliṅga, which Dubreuil locates near Chicacole. But Ramadas suggests its identification with Yeṇḍipalli in Vizagapatam or Eṇḍapilli in Ellore *tāluk,* and R. S. with Errañguntapalle in the Chintalapudi *tāluk* of the W. Godavari district.

7. Vishṇugopa of Kāñchī: The king must have belonged to the well-known Pallava family whose capital Kāñchī is now represented by Kāñchīpuram in Chingleput district.

8. Nīlarāja of Avamukta: Jayaswal infers from his reading of the Hāthīgumphā inscription that 'the Āva country or people had their capital at Pīṭhuṇḍa near the Godavari' which is identical with Ptolemy's Pitundra or Pitunda (metropolis). H. C. has drawn attention to the Avimukta-kshetra, on the bank of the Gautamī, i.e. Godāvarī river mentioned in the *Brahma Purāṇa.*

9. Hastivarman of Veṅgī: As noted above, the king belonged to the Śālaṅkāyana dynasty. Veṅgī was the name of the capital as well as of the country between the Krishṇā and the Godāvarī rivers extending up to the Eastern Ghats on the west. The capital city is now represented by Vegi or Pedda-Vegi, 7 miles north of Ellore.

10. Ugrasena of Pālakka: Smith identified Pālakka with Pālghāṭ or Pālakkāḍu in the south of the Malabar district. But it has most probably to be identified with a provincial capital of that name (Palakkada), mentioned in the Pallava records. The town was probably in the Nellore district. According to Ramadas the village of Pākkai in this district marks the site of ancient Pālakka.

11. Kuvera of Devarāshṭra: The old identification of Devarāshṭra with Mahārāshṭra[60] must be given up. It is probably the same as Devarāshṭra mentioned in a copper-plate grant found in the Vizaga-

59 *ABORI,* XXVI, 123.

60 It has been supported by Ramadas and R.S. The latter locates it in Satara district.

patam district, and corresponds to the region round Yellamanchili in that district. It has been identified with Kaliṅganagara by S. K.

12. Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapura: This place-name was emended by Smith into Kuśasthalapura which denotes the holy city of Dvārakā. This view must be given up. Dr. Barnett suggests the identification of Kusthalapura with Kuttalur, near Polur in North Arcot.[61] R. S. thinks that it is the same as Kuśāvatī or Kuśasthalī corresponding to Ramnagar on the southern bank of the Narmadā, near Maṇḍlā in M.P.[62]

It will be seen from the above discussion that the identification of the kingdoms, with the exception of Nos. 1, 4, 7 and 9, is very doubtful, and that of Nos. 2, 3, 5, 8 and 12 is extremely uncertain. So far, therefore, as we definitely know, Samudra-gupta proceeded along the eastern coast up to Kāñchīpuram and evidently returned more or less by the same route. There are no grounds to suppose that he turned west and returned through Mahārāshṭra and Khandesh. This view was principally based upon the old identifications of Nos. 6 and 11 which are no longer accepted by many scholars. The attempt of R. S. to revive it by his proposed identifications of Nos. 11 and 12 has not been very successful.

There is no doubt that Samudra-gupta proceeded through the Bilaspur and Raipur districts, but at what point he emerged on the eastern coast cannot be determined with certainty. Our view must depend on the identification of Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 6. According to the views generally accepted, Samudra-gupta passed through the Mahānadī valley to Orissa coast and then proceeded south through the Ganjam and Vizagapatam districts. But R. S. contends that Samudragupta passed through Bastar State and E. Godavari district to the coastal region near Pithapuram which was his 'first conquest on the coast of the Eastern Dakhan', and he had nothing to do with the Vizagapatam or Ganjam district. None of these views can be definitely accepted or rejected in the present state of our knowledge, but the former appears to be more probable.

II. THE NINE KINGS OF ĀRYĀVARTA

1. Rudradeva: K. N. Dikshit and several others[63] identified him with the Vākāṭaka king Rudrasena. But as the Vākāṭakas ruled in the Deccan and were far from being uprooted in the time of Samudragupta, this identification is not generally accepted. But the Vākāṭakas had also some territories in Central India as has already been pointed

61 *Cal. Rev.* (1924), 253 n.

62 S.K. refers to a river Kuśasthalī south of the Kṛishṇā.

63 Cf. Goyal, *op. cit.*, 142, n. 3.

out in course of the discussion about Vyāghra (No. 2 of Dakshiṇāpatha), and these were probably conquered by Samudra-gupta as we find them in the possession of the Guptas in later times. So the identification cannot be altogether rejected as improbable. Dr. D. C. Sircar suggests that Rudradeva might be the Western Satrap Rudradāman II or more probably his son Rudrasena III.[64] M. M. Nagar identifies Rudradeva with king Śrī Rudra whose coins have been found at Kauśāmbī (Kosam).[65]

2. Matila: A seal with the name Mattila was found at Bulandshahr in U.P. But as there is nothing to indicate that it was a royal seal, the identification of Matila and Mattila, though probable, cannot be regarded as certain.

3. Nāgadatta: Dr. D. C. Sircar suggests that he might be the king of North Bengal and ancestor of the long line of Gupta viceroys of that province whose names ended in Datta.[66]

4. Chandra-varman: He must be identified with the king of Pushkaraṇa bearing that name whose record has been found at Susunia hill in Bankura district, Bengal. The city of Pushkaraṇa is probably to be identified with a village named Pokharan or Pokharna on the Damodar river, about 25 miles to the north-east of Susunia hill[67] Ancient ruins, reaching back probably to the Śuṅga period, have been found in this locality. The identification of Pushkaraṇa with Pokharan or Pokharna in Marwar, originally proposed by MM. H. P. Sastri, can no longer be maintained.

5. Gaṇapati-nāga: He was evidently a Nāga king. The Purāṇas locate two different branches of the Nāgas at Vidiśā and Mathurā. Hundreds of Gaṇapati-nāga's coins have been found at Mathurā and only a few at Besnagar and Pawāya.[68] He may therefore be taken to be ruler of Mathurā, but Bh. regards him as king of Vidiśā.

6. Nāgasena: He ruled in Padmāvati (Padam Pawāya, 25 miles north-east of Narwar) as mentioned earlier. But some regard him as "a ruler of Mathurā".[69]

7. Achyuta: He ruled in Ahichhatra (Bareilly district) as mentioned earlier.

8. Nandi: H. C. suggests that Nandi was probably a Nāga prince because several Nāga kings with names ending in or beginning with Nandi are mentioned in the Purāṇas.

64 *PIHC,* VII, 78.
65 *JNSI,* XI, 13.
66 *PIHC,* VII, 81.
67 *ASIAR* (1927-28), 188.
68 *NHIP,* VI, 141, n. 2.
69. Cf. *ABORI,* Vol. XLIV (1963), 47.

9. Balavarman: K. N. Dikshit proposed to identify him with a king of Kāmarūpa of that name, who is mentioned as an ancestor of Bhāskara-varman in the copper-plate grant of the latter. But as Kāmarūpa is specifically named in the next category of States this identification cannot be maintained.

III. THE TRIBUTARY STATES

A. The Five Border Kingdoms

1. Samataṭa: It undoubtedly denotes a part of Bengal though it is difficult to define its boundary in the Gupta period. That part of Bengal which lies to the east of the Meghna river, corresponding to Tippera, Noakhali and Chittagong districts, was certainly comprised in it. Hiuan Tsang's description of Samataṭa, however, shows that in his time it probably included a part of Central Bengal, viz the districts of Faridpur, Bākharganja, and possibly also Yaśohar (Jessore) and Khulnā. Karmānta, which was probably the capital of Samataṭa in the seventh century A.D., has been identified with Baḍkāmtā, situated twelve miles west of Comilla.[70]

2. Ḍavāka: It has been identified with a place called Doboka in Nowgong district, Assam.[71] This is far more satisfactory than the older identification with Dacca or certain districts of North Bengal.

3-4. Kāmarūpa and Nepāla correspond, respectively, to parts of modern Assam and Nepal.

5. Karttṛipura: It probably corresponds to Kartārpur in the Jālandhar district and also comprised the territory of the Katuria or Katyar *rāj* of Kumaun, Garhwal and Rohilkhand. Some scholars identify it with Karūr (or Karor) and regard this name as being derived from Karttṛipura.[72]

B. The Nine Tribal States

1-4. The Mālavas, Ārjunāyanas, Yaudheyas, and Mādrakas: The location of the first, third, and the fourth of these tribes has been generally indicated above, and the early history of all of them has been discussed in the preceding volume. The coins of the Ārjunāyanas are known, but their provenance is uncertain. If the four names have been placed in geographical order, as seems likely, the Ārjunāyanas may be located between the Mālavas in the south and the Yaudheyas in the north. Their territory was probably situated within the modern State of Jaipur.

70 *HABR*, 8.

71 Barua, *Early History of Kamarupa*, 42; *Journ. Assam. Res. Soc.* I, 14-15, 124; V, 14-57.

72 *JIH*, XIV, 30.

5. The Ābhīras: Their history has been dealt with in the preceding volume. They had various settlements in W. Rājputāna and Mahārāshṭra. A tract of land between Jhansi and Bhilsa, called Ahirwara, was evidently named after them, and probably represents the Ābhīra principality at the time of Samudra-gupta.

6. The Prārjunas: Smith located them in the Narsinghpur district (M.P.); but Bh. prefers Narsingarh (*CI*) on the ground that it will bring them nearer to the Sanakānīkas.

7. Sanakānīkas: An inscription (No. 6) in Udayagiri near Bhilsa refers to a Sanakānīka chief who was a feudatory of Chandra-gupta II. It is evident therefore that the Sanakānīkas lived in this region in Samudra-gupta's time. The chief, his father, and his grandfather are all called *Mahārājas*. This shows that the Sanakānīkas had probably a monarchical form of government, and this might be true of some of the other tribal States also. It is, of course, not quite unlikely that all the three chiefs were hereditary governors appointed by the Guptas after they had conquered the country.

8. The Kākas: The Kākas are mentioned along with the Ṛishikas and the Vidarbhas in the *Mahābhārata* (vi.9.64). Smith located them near the well known Sāñchī hill which is referred to as Kākanāda in ancient inscriptions. Jayaswal proposes to identify Kāka-pur, a village 20 miles north of Bhilsa, as the ancient seat of the Kākas.[73]

9. The Kharaparikas: The Kharpara army is mentioned in a medieval inscription found in the Damoh district (M.P.). Hence Hiralal locates the Kharaparikas in that district.[74]

IV. THE SEMI-INDEPENDENT STATES

1. Daivaputra-shāhi-shāhānushāhi: Fleet, Smith, and Allan split up this compound into three parts and took each to denote a separate State.[75] But Bh. has shown very cogent reasons in favour of taking the whole compound as one name denoting the Kushāṇas who used all these titles or their equivalents. They ruled in W. Panjab and Afghanistan, and their history has been dealt with in the preceding volume. There is nothing to support the view that the Kushāṇa kingdom was divided into three States, the ruler of each of which appropriated one of these titles.

2. Śaka: The most reasonable view seems to be that the Śakas denoted the Western Kshatrapas, whose history has been dealt with in Chapter VI. Allan suggests that 'the Śakas particularly designate

73 *JBORS*, XVIII, 212.

74 *Ep. Ind.*, XII, 45.

75 Goyal (*op. cit.*, 176-77) splits up the compound into two parts: *Daivaputrashāhi* and *Shāhānushāhi*. He also identifies the first with Kidāra Kushāṇa and the second with the Sassanian king, Shāpur II.

those Śakas in the north who issued the coins of Kushān types... which bear the name of Śaka'. But the name is really Shāka, and need not be taken as an ethnic name. Bh. suggests that the Śakas refer to a separate Śaka family ruling in Mālwā, one of whose records, dated 241 (= A.D. 319), has been found at Sāñchī. The date of this record is, however, uncertain.

3. The Muruṇḍas: The Muruṇḍas have been identified with the Maroundai of Ptolemy 'who locates them on the left bank of the Ganges, south of the Gogra, down to the top of the delta'. Medieval Jaina books refer to Maruṇḍarāja as ruler of Kānyakubja and as residing in Pāṭaliputra. A Chinese text mentions *Meou-loun* as the title of the king of a country in India ruling about the middle of the third century A.D. This *Meou-loun* has been taken to be the same as Muruṇḍa,[76] but it is difficult to accept Allan's view that the Chinese description of his capital seems to suggest Pāṭaliputra, for the Chinese text places the capital about 7000 *li* (i.e. more than 1000 miles) from the mouth of the Ganges.

It is to be noted that the location of the Muruṇḍas in the upper Ganges valley, not to speak of Pāṭaliputra, in the time of Samudra-gupta, is hardly compatible with what we know, or is generally accepted as true, about the early history of the Guptas. The Muruṇḍas are mentioned in the Purāṇas along with the Śakas, Yavanas, and Tushāras and are described as of foreign origin (*mlechcha-sambhava*). They probably ruled in the north-west or west along with the Śakas and Kushāṇas.

Sten Konow,[77] however, holds that 'Muruṇḍa' is not the name of a tribe, but a Śaka word meaning *'lord'*, and Śaka-Muruṇḍa denotes the Western Satraps. Jayaswal takes the same view but also includes the smaller Śaka rulers like the Shīlada, Shāka and the Gaḍahara chiefs.

76 Allan, *CGD*, xxix; S. Lévi in *Melanges Charles de Harlez*, 176-85.
77 *JBORS*, XVIII, 210.

Chapter Four

THE GUPTA EMPIRE

1. THE RĀMA-GUPTA PROBLEM

According to the unanimous testimony of the Gupta records Samudra-gupta was succeeded by his son Chandra-gupta II, born of his chief queen Dattadevī. It appears from the mutilated Eran inscription (No. 4) of Samudra-gupta that Dattadevī had many sons and grandsons, though on account of the loss of a portion of the record it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion on this point.[1] In the official genealogy of the Gupta kings, Chandra-gupta II is said to have been accepted by his father (*tat-parigṛihītaḥ*), whereas the corresponding expression in respect of all other kings following him as meditating on his feet (*tat-pādānudhyāta*).[2] It has been inferred from all this that Samudra-gupta selected, out of many sons, Chandra-gupta II as his fit successor.

This view was unanimously held by scholars until about half a century ago when the discovery of a few extracts from a long-lost dramatic work, *Devī-Chandra-guptam,* completely changed the situation. On the strength of these passages, corroborated by some external evidence, it was at first suspected, and later asserted with more and more conviction, that Rāma-gupta, an elder son, succeeded Samudra-gupta, but was later killed by his younger brother Chandra-gupta, who not only usurped his brother's throne but also married his widow. There has been a keen and protracted controversy among scholars about how far this strange story and the romantic details accompanying it may be regarded as historical facts.[3] As the recon-

1 Cf. the edition of the inscription in *SI* (by D. C. Sircar), 260 ff.

2 For the various interpretations of this term cf. *IHQ*, XX, 288; *IC*, IX, 115, 118.

3 A vast literature has grown on this subject and it is not possible in a general history to treat the different viewpoints in detail. The following list, though not exhaustive, includes all the important contributors on the subject.

1. S. Lèvi—*JA*, CCIII, 201.
2. R. Saraswati—*IA*, LII, 181.
3. S. Altekar—*JBORS*, XIV, 223-53; XV, 134-41.
   (the most comprehensive treatment of the problem).
4. R. D. Banerji—*AIG*, 26.
5. D. R. Bhandarkar—*Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, 189.
6. K. P. Jayaswal—*JBORS*, XVIII, 17.

struction of the history of the Guptas after the death of Samudra-gupta is entirely dependent upon one's attitude towards this question, it must be dealt at some length before we proceed further.

The dramatic work *Devī-Chandra-guptam* was composed by Viśākhadeva, generally taken to be the same as the author of *Mudrārākshasa.* Its full text has not been discovered, but thirteen passages from it have been quoted by way of illustration in four different works on dramaturgy.[4] As we have no knowledge of the context and sequence of these extracts, it is not an easy task to derive reliable information from them; but there is a fair degree of agreement among scholars about their general purport, which may be summarised as follows:

King Rāma-gupta, besieged in his camp at Alipura by a Śaka king, was forced to buy peace on condition of surrendering his queen Dhruvadevī to the enemy. This step is said to have been taken to appease the *prakritis*, a term which may mean either the 'subjects' or 'the ministers'. The latter meaning is preferable, as general subjects do not count for much in a military camp. Chandra-gupta, the younger brother of the king, finding no other means to save the situation, thought of performing some mystic rites in the night in order to secure the help of the Vetālas (vampires). It was necessary for this to get out of the camp, but this was difficult as the enemies kept a strict watch. Chandra-gupta was thinking of some plan to get out when an ingenious way suggested itself to him by the accidental visit of a female attendant in search of a courtesan who was in love with Chandra-gupta. This attendant was on the look out for the courtesan in order to give her a suit of dress and ornaments which queen Dhruvadevī had presented her. The sight of the dress and ornaments immediately suggested to Chandra-gupta the device of putting on the disguise of the queen. Whether he used this to go out at night is not clear, but certainly he appeared before his brother Rāma-gupta and suggested that instead of the queen, he should be sent in her disguise to the Śaka chief in fulfilment of the terms of the treaty. Rāma-gupta tried to dissuade his brother from taking this great risk, but failed. Ultimately Chandra-gupta visited the Śaka chief in that disguise, killed him, and returned safely to his brother. Next we find Chandra-gupta feigning madness for fear of his own life and also to conceal his love for somebody. Then he decides to visit the palace.

7. Winternitz—*Aiyangar Comm. Vol.,* 359.
8. Sten Konow—*JBORS,* XXIII, 444.
9. V. V. Mirashi—*IHQ,* X, 48; *IA,* LXII, 201.
10. N. Das Gupta—*IC,* IV, 216.
11. H. C. Raychaudhuri—*PHAI,* 465, n.1.
12. V. Raghavan—*Benares Hindu University Magazine,* II, 23-54, 307.

4 Cf. Raghavan, *op. cit.*

This closes the Fifth Act of the drama, and no further extract is available from the remaining five Acts.[5] But the rest of the story may be reconstructed without much difficulty from other evidence to which reference will presently be made. It may be easily presumed that Rāma-gupta alienated his wife and suffered in the estimation of the people by his ignoble conduct, while Chandra-gupta won the popular esteem and the love and admiration of the queen by his heroic adventure. So Rāma-gupta grew jealous of his brother and it was evidently to avoid the enmity of the king and conceal his love for the queen that Chandra-gupta feigned madness as described in Act V. But ultimately he killed the king, usurped his throne, and married his widow.

Such is the strange story that formed the plot of the drama *Devī-Chandra-guptam*. There has been no difficulty in identifying the hero and heroine with Chandra-gupta II and his queen Dhruvadevī. The question, therefore, arises how far we may regard the story as based on facts, and how much of it is merely poetic fancy.

Those who are inclined to accept as historical the main incidents revealed in the drama chiefly rely on the corroboration afforded by external evidence.[6] First, we have the statement in *Harsha-charita* by Bāṇabhaṭṭa that 'Chandra-gupta, disguised in a woman's dress, murdered the Śaka chief who coveted another's wife'. That Bāṇa referred to the incident which is described in the drama is made clear by his commentator Śaṅkara who elucidates the passage by saying 'that the Śaka chief wanted Dhruvadevī, wife of Chandra-gupta's brother, and Chandra-gupta, dressed as Dhruvadevī, along with a band of men, all disguised as women, killed the Śaka chief secretly'. The second corroboration comes from two Rāshṭrakūṭa records. A copper-plate grant of King Amoghavarsha contrasts this king with Vikramāditya who, in spite of his much vaunted charity, killed his brother and took away his kingdom and his wife. There is also a similar verse in respect of Govinda IV. Now Chandra-gupta II was known as Vikramāditya, and the passages obviously refer to him. A further, but doubtful, corroboration is afforded by a verse quoted by Rājaśekhara in his *Kāvya-mīmāṁsā* which refers to a king Śarma-(or Sena) gupta, besieged somewhere in the Himalayas, as having given his wife Dhruvasvāminī to the Khasa chief. The name of the queen may be easily regarded as a variant of Dhruvadevī, but the name of the king varies and we have Khasa instead of a Śaka chief. Lastly, reference has been made to the story of Rawwal and

5 The drama *Devī-Chandra-guptam* belongs to the Prakaraṇa class which usually consists of ten Acts (Raghavan, 35).

6 All the important evidences referred to below have been collected by Altekar (*op. cit.*).

Barkamaris, as narrated in *Mujmal-ut-Tawārīkh,* which seems to be an echo of the plot of the *Devī-Chandra-guptam.*

This long array of corroborations from different sources, belonging to different periods and different regions, appears at first sight to invest the story with a fair degree of authenticity. But it is not unlikely that, with the exception of the passage in *Harsha-charita,* all these corroborative stories, none of which is earlier than the ninth century A.D., are really based on the drama itself. The date of its author Viśākhadeva or Viśākhadatta is not known with certainty, but he most probably flourished in or after the sixth century A.D.[7] Bāṇa is thus the only known independent authority who makes any allusion to the story, and it is remarkable that he does not refer to Rāma-gupta or Dhruvadevī in any way. His commentator Śaṅkara flourished much later, about the fourteenth century A.D.[8], and might have based his commentary on the story that was current and popular in his time.

The whole episode of Rāma-gupta thus rests on the unsupported testimony of a dramatic work, composed about three or four centuries after the occurrence of the supposed events. This by itself is a strong argument against accepting it as historical. But its authenticity may be seriously doubted on other grounds, too.

In the first place, the name of Rāma-gupta figures nowhere in the Gupta genealogy, which not only represents Chandra-gupta as the immediate successor of Samudra-gupta, but the phrase *tatparigṛihīta,* applied to him, seems to indicate that he was nominated by his father to succeed him. As against this it has been argued that *tatparigṛihīta* is a technical term not to be taken literally. It is, no doubt, applied exclusively to Chandra-gupta, but so is the word *satputra* (good son), and it may be argued with equal cogency that both these terms were used with a deliberate motive to legitimize the claim of Chandra-gupta II who had usurped the throne of his elder brother.

Secondly, there is no definite evidence of the existence of a king named Rāma-gupta in the Imperial Gupta family. The name does not occur in any Gupta inscription and when the legend first came to be known there was no coin issued by Rāma-gupta. It was urged against this that such negative evidence does not mean anything. It was also

7 Jayaswal, Sten Konow, Altekar and N. Das Gupta take Viśākhadatta to be a contemporary of Chandra-gupta II. Winternitz also at first held the same view but changed it on the ground that the drama *Devī-Chandra-guptam* could not possibly have been written either during the lifetime of Chandra-gupta II and Dhruvadevī or their son. He accordingly assigns it to the sixth century A.D. Lèvi inclines to the same view. The fact that Viśākhadatta is not included among the great writers by Bāṇa may indicate that he flourished later than the seventh century A.D. Nothing can, therefore, be definitely said of Viśākhadatta's date except that he flourished between fourth and ninth century A.D. (*B. C. Law,* Vol. I, 50-51).

8 According to Jayaswal (p. 19) Śaṅkara flourished in the eighteenth century A.D.

suggested that Kācha, who issued gold coins closely resembling those of Samudra-gupta, might have been the same as Rāma-gupta, the name Rāma in the existing text of the drama being a corrupt reading for Kācha. The position has been changed very considerably by the subsequent discovery of more than 200 copper coins of Rāma-gupta in Eastern Malwa which belong to the well-known Garuḍa and Garuḍadhvaja types of Imperial Gupta coins. Prof. K. D. Bajpai who noticed these coins accepted them as convincing evidence for accepting the genuineness of the story of Rāma-gupta, and was followed by others. But Dr. D. C. Sircar has challenged this view on the ground that at least two other kings, *Mahārāja* Hari-gupta and Indra-gupta, issued copper coins of the Garuḍa type, and therefore, on the basis of coins alone, Rāma-gupta cannot, any more than these two kings, be regarded as belonging to the Imperial Gupta family. Dr. Sircar thinks that all these three kings 'flourished on the decline of the imperial authority of the Guptas in the outlying provinces of the Gupta empire about the close of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century A.D.'. Prof. Bajpai opposes this view on grounds which cannot be regarded as strong, far less convincing.[9]

Thirdly, attention may justly be drawn to the absurdity of the story. It is difficult to believe that a Śaka chief could reduce the successor of Samudra-gupta to such dire distress that he had to agree to surrender his queen to the enemy. It is true that extraordinary circumstances and chances of war sometimes reduce even a powerful foe to sore straits, but then it is impossible to believe that Samudra-gupta's son and ministers would stoop so low as to offer the chief queen as a price for liberty. Such an act would be considered as most ignominious in any age or country, and more so in India where even in later and more degenerate days hundreds of men and women in similar circumstances are known to have sacrificed their lives rather than their honour. It is a well-known canon of criticism that the more incredible a story is, the stronger should be the evidence for accepting it. Nothing but the strongest and most unimpeachable evidence should incline us to accept, as true, the story of the ignoble treaty concluded by Rāma-gupta with the Śaka chief and the disloyal and disgraceful conduct of Chandra-gupta towards his brother. Arguments have been advanced to show that the marriage of widows was not prohibited by the laws of those days, but it is impossible to condemn Chandra-gupta II too strongly for murdering his elder brother and then marrying his widow. The personal name of the queen, Dhruvasvāminī —one with fixed devotion to husband—also must have always been

9 For the views of Prof. Bajpai, *cf. JIH*, Vol. XLII (1964), pp. 389-93 and the references given in f.n. 1 of p. 389. For Dr. Sircar's view, cf. *JIH*, Vol. XL (1962), 533-37.

a bitter reproach to her life and conduct. It is necessary to remind the apologists of the conduct of Chandra-gupta II that it has been vigorously denounced in the Rāshṭrakūṭa records which are our only source of information about it.

On the whole it must be admitted that the Rāma-gupta episode rests on a very slender basis, and contains elements which are not only highly incredible in themselves, but are also very much opposed to our knowledge of facts and belief in practices of the period. It is therefore impossible to accept even the general outline of the story as based on historical facts.

2. RĀMA-GUPTA—A HISTORICAL CHARACTER

The above gives a fair summary of the opposing views on the subject and the reasons on which they are based. But the recent discovery of three inscriptions on stone images in the region of Vidiśā (Madhya Pradesh), two of which clearly, and the third probably, refer to *Mahārājādhirāja* Rāma-gupta,[10] definitely prove the existence of Emperor Rāma-gupta, and it may be reasonably assumed that he is the historical figure round whom the romantic plot of the *Devī-Chandra-guptam* has been skilfully woven. The inscriptions, however, do not solve all the problems discussed above. In the first place, it is not clear whether Rāma-gupta succeeded his father and was later ousted (if not murdered) by his brother Chandra-gupta, for it is equally likely that on the death of Samudra-gupta both declared themselves Emperor though actually in possession of different regions of the empire. In the second place, the inscriptions do not throw any light on the romantic elements in the story, mentioned above, namely, the proposal of Rāma-gupta to buy peace by offering his queen to the Śaka king, the stratagem adopted by Chandra-gupta to visit the latter in the disguise of the queen and kill him, and the subsequent conduct of Chandra-gupta which deprived Rāma-gupta of his life, wife and throne. For, the existence of a predecessor or rival claimant to the throne does not necessarily confirm these details which, as shown above, must be regarded as highly unlikely and unnatural.

Till further evidence comes to light we must suspend our judgment on these details and regard Chandra-gupta as successor to the throne of Samudra-gupta for all practical purposes. For, whether we regard Rāma-gupta as the undisputed successor of Samudra-gupta or a rival claimant to Chandra-gupta, we do not know anything about him or his rule from any reliable, not to speak of authentic, source.

In view of this it is also unnecessary to discuss at length such details of the story as the identity of the Śaka chief killed by Chandra-

10 *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, pp. 247-51. Also cf. Vol. XIX, Nos. 1-2, pp. 139-151.

gupta II, the location of his military camp,[11] the duration of Rāma-gupta's reign[12] and the manner in which he was trapped into submission by the Śaka chief and later murdered by his brother.[13]

3. CHANDRA-GUPTA II

We have discussed in the preceding section two intriguing questions concerning Chandra-gupta II, viz, whether he was nominated to the throne by Samudra-gupta, or preceded by Rāma-gupta. To neither of these can we give any definite reply, but we may assume for the time being that he ascended the throne immediately after his father's death.

The date of his accession can be fixed within narrow limits by an inscription (No. 5) engraved on a pillar at Mathurā, dated in the year 61 of the Gupta era which is equivalent to A.D. 380-81. It also gives the regnal year, but unfortunately this portion is so damaged that the letters cannot be clearly made out. The word has been read as '*prathame*'[14] (first) by some and '*pañchame*'[15] (fifth) by others. Accordingly A.D. 380-81 would be the first or the fifth regnal year of Chandra-gupta II, and his date of accession would therefore be either A.D. 376-77 or 380-81.

We do not possess any long *praśasti* of Chandra-gupta II setting forth the details of his military campaigns like the Allahabad *praśasti* of his father. But we have clear evidence that he was a worthy son of his father and carried on victorious military campaigns to extend the bounds of his empire. A short inscription (No. 10) found inside a cave at Udayagiri near Bhilsa throws very interesting light on this question. It records the construction of the cave for god Śambhu (Śiva) by Vīrasena, an inhabitant of Pāṭaliputra, and the foreign minister of Chandra-gupta II. The emperor is described as both 'a king of kings and ascetic' (*rājādhirājarshi*) and his activities are said to be beyond comprehension. He is further described as one 'who had bought the earth with prowess as the purchase-price, and reduced

11 Altekar and Sten Konow take him to be a Śaka Satrap of Western India while R. D. Banerji, Jayaswal, and Mirashi regard him as a Kushāṇa king.

12 Alipura is the name given in one of the passages quoted from *Devī-Chandraguptam*. According to the extant texts of Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita*, Chandra-gupta II killed the Śaka chief in *aripura* i.e. the enemy's city. But it has been plausibly suggested that *aripura* is a mistake for *alipura*. Mirashi locates it in or near the Jālandhar Doab, and Jayaswal identifies it with Aliwal in the Jālandhar district. According to the verse quoted in *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, the Gupta king was besieged at Kārtikeyanagara in the Himalayas, and Bhandarkar identifies it with Baijnath or Baidyanath in the district of Kumaon.

13 Altekar supplies these details on the basis of the story narrated in *Mujmal-ut-Tawārīkh*.

14 *ABORI*, XVIII, 170.

15 *IHQ*, XVIII, 272.

the other kings to the position of slaves'. In conclusion we are told that Vīrasena came in the company of the king 'who was seeking to conquer the whole world'. This short record is a remarkable evidence of the spirit of aggressive imperialism which characterized the policy of Chandra-gupta II. It is proved alike by the vaunted boast about the conquest of the world and the specific event that Chandra-gupta reached as far as Bhilsa in the course of a military campaign undertaken with the express purpose of conquering the whole world.

We have another inscription (No. 6) in the same locality recording the construction of a (Vaishṇava) cave temple by Sanakānīka *Mahārāja*, a feudatory of Chandra-gupta II, in the year 82 (A.D. 401-2). A third inscription (No. 8) found in Sāñchī, less than five miles from Bhilsa, records the pious donations to the great Buddhist monastery by Āmrakārdava, who had acquired victory and fame in many battles and whose livelihood was secured by serving Chandra-gupta. It would thus appear that he was a military officer under Chandra-gupta II. This inscription is dated in the year 93 (A.D. 412-13).

Apart from the curious fact that these three records, found in the same region, refer to the three important religious sects of the day, they present other interesting features. Is it a mere accident that the region was visited during the early years of the fifth century A.D. by the foreign minister, a military officer, and a feudatory chief of Chandra-gupta II? One of them expressly says that he accompanied the king in his military campaign, and it would not perhaps be stretching the imagination too much if we regard the two others as coming to the ancient city of Vidiśā (Bhilsa) or some neighbouring place on the same mission. This pre-supposes a protracted military campaign carried on by Chandra-gupta II to the west of Mālwā, and fortunately there are independent grounds in support of such a view.

The only important power that ruled in this region was the Śaka dynasty, known as Western Satraps, whose history has been discussed in the preceding volume (pp. 273 ff.). As noted there, this family of foreign rulers had been established in the latter half of the first century A.D., and their continued existence for more than three centuries is proved by an almost unbroken series of coins of a peculiar type and design. This series abruptly comes to an end in the last decade of the fourth century A.D.[16] but reappears in the second decade of the fifth century[17] as issues of Chandra-gupta II, and is continued by his successors. The conclusion is thus irresistible that

16 The latest coins bear dates of which the hundredth figure is 3 and tenth figure 1. The unit figure being lost the date may be any year between 310 and 319 Śaka (A.D. 388 and 397).

17 Only the first symbol of the date denoting 90 is legible. As it is in the Gupta era, the date falls between 409 and 415 when Chandra-gupta had ceased to reign.

the dominions of the Western Satraps were conquered by Chandra-gupta II and annexed to the Gupta Empire some time towards the close of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A.D. The 'Śaka-muruṇḍas' (p. 27), who were in a state of subordinate alliance during the reign of Samudra-gupta, were finally rooted out by his son who thus carried to its logical conclusion the imperial policy laid down by his father.

Literary references to a conflict between Chandra-gupta and a Śaka chief have been discussed above. If we leave aside the story of Rāma-gupta, we may regard Bāṇa's casual reference as an episode in Chandra-gupta's long-drawn struggle against the Western Satraps. It is not unlikely, as Bāṇa says, that the Śaka king, in course of his disreputable intrigues with another's wife, was surprised and killed by his adversary Chandra-gupta II who probably lay concealed in the garb of a woman. Possibly this was the germ out of which developed the later story of Rāma-gupta and Dhruvadevī. In any case, the utter collapse of the Śaka power, in consequence of such a death of the Śaka chief, is more in consonance with known facts, but it is hardly reconcilable with the presumption that he was, a short while ago, so powerful as to compel the Gupta Emperor to accept peace on the most dishonourable terms.

The whole of the Kāthiāwār Peninsula was now included in the Gupta dominion and the Arabian Sea formed its western boundary. It was undoubtedly a remarkable achievement and must have profoundly impressed the imagination of the people. After more than three centuries the last vestige of the foreign rule was stamped out from Gujarat and Kāthiāwār Peninsula, and through their well-known harbours the Gupta Empire was brought into contact with the rich commercial markets of the western world. The victories of Chandra-gupta must, therefore, have been hailed on political, economic, and sentimental grounds, and probably formed the main basis of his claim to the title of Vikramāditya of hallowed memory. There were at least two significant facts that justified the assumption of the title by him. As in the case of the Vikramāditya of tradition, he defeated the Śakas and did more than that by finally extinguishing their power in India. Like Vikramāditya, again, Ujjayinī was a seat of his power even if not a regular capital. He had, therefore, in a technical sense, far greater claim to the title of Vikramāditya than his father. Many scholars hold that the whole tradition about Vikramāditya grew out of the historical figure of Chandra-gupta II. This theory, which denies the existence of king Vikramāditya, or even any tradition to that effect, before the time of Chandra-gupta, must of course be given up, if we accept the view that the title was borne by Samudra-gupta also. But the probability is that the old

tradition of Vikramāditya was revived by the Gupta Emperors, and gradually gained new elements by its association with them. For not only Samudra-gupta and Chandra-gupta II, but other Gupta kings also assumed the same or a similar title, and each of them perhaps contributed something new to an already existing tradition. Thus developed, slowly and gradually, the complete cycle of legends out of which posterity built up the composite figure of a single Vikramāditya, who was the repository of all kingly power and virtues, conqueror of the Śakas, founder of an era, patron of men of letters and science etc. The legend of Vikramāditya thus partly, though perhaps very largely, reflects the glory and splendour of the Gupta Age, but it is hardly justifiable to regard Chandra-gupta II alone as the historic prototype of the legendary figure of Vikramāditya. Whether there was a historical king Vikramāditya who founded the *Samvat* era in 58 B.C. may be doubted, but it is difficult to accept the view that Chandra-gupta II was the parent source of all the legends that are current about him.[18]

So far we have discussed only the conquest of the Śaka dominions by Chandra-gupta II. But, was his victorious military campaign limited to that one expedition? It is not easy to give a definite answer one way or the other, for it depends upon the interpretation of a record on which widely different views have been held. This is an inscription engraved on the famous iron pillar which stands near the Kutb-Minar at Delhi and is generally referred to as the Meharaulī Pillar Inscription (No. 67) from the name of the neighbouring village. It contains the eulogy of a king whose name is simply given as Chandra. He fought a battle in the Vaṅga country (*Vaṅgeshu*)[19] and defeated the enemies who, uniting together, came against him. He also crossed in warfare the seven faces or feeders (*sapta mukhāni*) of the river Sindhu,[20] and defeated the Vāhlikas. The king was devoted to Vishṇu, and set up the pillar as a standard of that god, on the hill called Vishṇupada.

The first question that arises is the identity of king Chandra who

18 Different views about the historical character of Vikramāditya have been collected in the *Vikrama Volume* (Scindia Oriental Institute, Ujjain, 1948). For the views expressed above, cf. pp. 290-94.

19 Vaṅga is used both as the name of the people and of the country. Although used in the plural, it must denote here the country. According to rules of Sanskrit Grammar the plural of the people's name can be used as the name of country (*NIA*, I, 196).

20 The faces probably really mean the feeders of the river Sindhu and not the lower parts of the river as we understand by the English word 'mouths'. The seven feeders would naturally be the five rivers of the Panjab, with the Kabul and the Kunar rivers as suggested by Jayaswal (*JBORS*, XVIII, 32). Sten Konow, however, takes it as the seven mouths of the Indus (*NIA*, I, 198).

was powerful enough to have carried victorious campaigns to Bengal on the east and to the trans-Indus countries on the west. He has been successively identified, among others, with the Gupta kings Chandra-gupta I and II, king Chandra-varman of the Varman family of Mandasor, and with the Kushāṇa king Kanishka, who had a second name Chandra.[21] The identification with Chandra-gupta I and Chandra-varman has not been generally accepted as there are no good grounds to believe that either of them was powerful enough to carry on conquests from Bengal to the Sindhu (Indus). The identity with Kanishka is not favoured on the ground that the alphabet of the Meharaulī Inscription appears to be later than that of the Kushāṇa period.[22] So at present scholars are generally in favour of identifying king Chandra with Chandra-gupta II. This theory is undoubtedly the most plausible, but cannot be regarded as certain.

Proceeding on this assumption we may regard Chandra-gupta II as having attempted to complete the task left unfinished by his father in the north-western region, very much in the same way as he did in the west. The *Daivaputra-Shāhi-Shāhānushāhi*, mentioned in the Allahabad *praśasti* as having enjoyed a position of subordinate alliance like the Śakas, must have been defeated, and the whole of the Western Panjab overrun, by Chandra-gupta II. He probably even proceeded beyond the Sindhu, as mentioned in the Meharaulī Inscription, and advanced to the country of the Vāhlikas which is usually identified with Balkh.[23] There is no inherent improbability in this assumption though some scholars locate the Vāhlikas in the Panjab,[24] ignoring the express statement of the inscription that he crossed the seven mouths of the Indus before conquering them. If

21 The question has been discussed in *JRASB*, IX, 179. In addition to the references given therein cf. *EI*, XIV, 367; *JIH*, XVII, 34; *IC*, V, 206; *NIA*, I, 188; *IHQ*, XXI, 202; *JAHRS*, X, 86; *Poona Orientalist*, 1945-46. Goyal (op. cit., 201-9) identifies Chandra with Samudra-gupta.

22 On this point cf. the very interesting observations of F. W. Thomas, in *India Antiqua*, 296.

23 *JBORS*, XVIII, 32.

24 Sten Konow locates them in the Punjab and Sind (*NIA*, 1, 198). Bhandarkar locates the Vāhlikas in the north-eastern Panjab near the Beas river. His argument that the Vāhlikas and Vishṇupada are mentioned together in the *Rāmāyaṇa* as in the Meharauli inscription (*JAHRS*, X, 87) misses the point that the two are not associated in any way in the inscription as they are in the Epic (cf. also *SI*, 276, n. 2). The fact that the Vāhlikas were defeated after Chandra had crossed the 'seven faces of the Indus' is altogether ignored by Bhandarkar. Another scholar explains it away by suggesting that although all the seven rivers were crossed, 'the most decisive action seems to have been fought at the crossing of the Beas and the rest seems to have been a triumphal march.' (*JBORS*, XX, 99). This is hardly satisfactory unless we suppose that the Vāhlikas occupied the whole of the Panjab and even territory beyond it.

we accept this view, the military campaign of Chandra-gupta II must be regarded as a remarkable achievement, unequalled by any Indian ruler since the days of Chandra-gupta Maurya.

But in spite of the brilliant success of Chandra-gupta II from a military point of view, his victory in this region was not perhaps as decisive as against the Śakas. There is nothing to indicate that the Panjab was annexed to the Gupta dominion and formed an integral part of it. The use of the Gupta Era in an inscription[25] found at Shorkot (Jhang district, Panjab), and the name of Chandra-gupta on some coins of the Kushāṇa type[26] found in the locality undoubtedly testify to his political influence in that region, but neither in his reign, nor in that of any of his successors do we find the province ruled by any Gupta governor, as was the case in Gujarat and Kāthiāwār Peninsula which once formed the dominions of the Śakas. On the other hand there is hardly any trace of Gupta influence in the Panjab after the reign of Chandra-gupta II, and coins reveal the existence of petty chieftains. Although the coins bear the name Kidāra and were therefore presumably imitated from those of the Kidāra Kushāṇas, the rulers have purely Indian names.[27] They were therefore either Indians continuing the use of the old type of coins current in the locality, or Hinduized Kushāṇas. In any case the rule of the Kushāṇas as foreigners had come to an end in the Panjab. To Chandra-gupta II, therefore, belongs the credit of having swept off the last vestige of foreign rule in India after a period of six hundred years.

The conquest of Vaṅga by Chandra-gupta II, as mentioned in the Meharaulī inscription, would indicate an extension of the Gupta dominion on the east, very much in the same way as on the west and the north-west. Vaṅga is a synonym of Samataṭa which is included among the frontier tributary states of Samudra-gupta. It would appear that Chandra-gupta's efforts to incorporate the territory into the Gupta dominion were stoutly resisted by the semi-independent chiefs of Bengal who had been united in a common cause.[28] They were, however, defeated, and Vaṅga formed an integral part of the Gupta kingdom. As will be shown later, a member of the Imperial Gupta family was governing Vaṅga early in the sixth century A.D., and although we have no positive evidence for the intervening period,

25 The inscription is dated in the year 83 which is referred to the Gupta Era though this is not specifically mentioned in the record. It would thus fall in the reign of Chandra-gupta II (*EI*, XVI, 15).

26 *JRAS*, 1893, p. 145.

27 Cf. Ch. VI.

28 The expression *samety-āgatān* (who came united together) seems to indicate that several chiefs had combined against Chandra-gupta II.

we may well believe that Vaṅga or E. Bengal was annexed a century earlier by Chandra-gupta II.

The Meharaulī Iron Pillar inscription thus furnishes very important and interesting information about the reign of Chandra-gupta II, if we identify him with king Chandra mentioned in that record. It is to be observed that the information thus supplied fits in well with the known facts of Gupta history and the career of Chandra-gupta II, and so does the qualifying phrase 'who attained sole supreme sovereignty in the world acquired by his own arm and (enjoyed) for a very long time'.[29] Even the Vaishṇava faith of king Chandra, the only personal trait of the king mentioned in the inscription, is in full agreement with the proposed identification inasmuch as Chandra-gupta II is called Bhāgavata in the Gupta records.

Apart from the highly important inscription it bears, the iron pillar itself is a monument of surpassing interest. It is nearly 24 feet in length with an average diameter of about 14 inches. The weight exceeds six tons, and the material is pure malleable iron of 7.66 specific gravity welded together. An eminent expert observed in 1881 that 'It is not many years since the production of such a pillar would have been an impossibility in the largest foundries of the world, and even now there are comparatively few where a similar mass of metal could be turned out'.[30] This fact also points to a period, like that of Chandra-gupta II, when the material resources and technical skill were highly developed. It is a great pity that we do not definitely know who built this monument and where. If we identify Chandra with Chandra-gupta II we must hold that it was a flagstaff (*dhvaja*) in honour of Vishṇu, set up by him on the Vishṇupada hill, as expressly mentioned in the concluding verse of the inscription. But he died probably shortly after, in any case, before the inscription was engraved. For it says that the 'king has quitted the earth and gone to the other world'.[31] It may be remarked that a similar Vishṇu-*dhvaja* was set up after the death of Kumāra-gupta by his son Skanda-gupta (No. 30).

But the pillar was not certainly set up by Chandra-gupta where it

29 Even the expression 'by the breezes of whose prowess the southern ocean is even still perfumed' applied to Chandra fits in with Chandra-gupta II who conquered the territory of the Śakas extending up to the Arabian Sea. From the point of view of one writing in the N.E. Panjab the Arabian Sea may very well be regarded as the Southern Sea.

30 For the description and the quotation cf. *FAS*, 172.

31 This is the generally accepted view. D. Sharma, however, interprets the verse to mean that the king was still alive (*IC*, V, 206; *JIH*, XVI, 17). Bhandarkar thinks that Chandra 'was not dead but alive, when the eulogy was engraved, though he was not then king.' (*JAHRS*, X, 86).

stands now.[32] For it is distinctly stated that it originally stood on the Vishṇupada hill, and there is no trace of any hill near Meharaulī. The identity of Vishṇupada is uncertain. It is mentioned in the two epics, and the context shows that it cannot be very far from the Vipāśā or Beas river.[33] It has accordingly been located in the Siwalik range near the Beas or somewhere in the hills near Sadhaura[34] in the Ambala district. Others have suggested, with less probability, Hardwar[35] or a site beyond the Beas in the border of Gurdaspur and Kangra districts.[36] It would thus appear that the dominion directly administered by Chandra-gupta extended up to the border of the Panjab.

The conquests as well as the extent of his empire fully entitled Chandra-gupta II to the dignity of an Aśvamedha sacrifice which was performed both by his father and son. That he had more justification than at least his son in proclaiming his power and status by this time-honoured ceremony, admits of no doubt. Yet it does not seem that he celebrated it; for the familiar series of Aśvamedha type of coins are not known to have been issued by him. Some scholars, however, believe that he, too, performed the sacrifice, on the strength of a short inscription on a stone image of a horse found near Banaras (Benares). The inscription has been read as Chandramgu, which is taken to be Chandra-gupta,[37] but the published facsimile of the inscription does not support this reading. There is thus no evidence that Chandra-gupta II actually celebrated the Aśvamedha sacrifice.

The marriage alliances of Chandra-gupta II seem to have formed an important part of his imperial policy. The marriage of his daughter Prabhāvatī with the Vākāṭaka king Rudrasena II undoubtedly helped him to establish his political influence in the Deccan. For when his widowed daughter acted as regent for her minor son, the Gupta court exercised great power in the administration of the Vākāṭaka territory. This is clearly evidenced by the two copper-plate grants issued during her regency in which the names of her Gupta ancestors with imperial titles appear before that of the Vākāṭaka king with the title of *Mahārāja*.[38]

This alliance must have stood Chandra-gupta II in good stead

32 According to tradition it was removed to Delhi by the Tomara king Anaṅgapāla (*JBORS*, XX, 100).
33 *IC*, I, 515.
34 *JBORS*, XX, 97; *JIH*, XVI, 17.
35 *ABORI*, VIII, 172; *JBORS*, XVIII, 31.
36 *IC*, III, 512.
37 *IHQ*, III, 719.
38 Cf. Poona Pl. (*EI*, XV, 39); Riddhapur Pl. (*JPASB*, XX, 56).

when he was engaged in the war against the Śakas, and it is not unlikely that this very purpose at least partially influenced the action of Chandra-gupta.[39] To the same motive may also be ascribed the marriage of Chandra-gupta II himself with Kuvera-nāgā, the mother of Prabhāvatī-guptā. The Nāgas who ruled in N. Mālwā and the adjacent region held an important position in North Indian politics before Samudra-gupta established his empire, and Chandra-gupta II probably sought to win their sympathy and support by marrying a princess of the Nāga family. Apart from the help they might have given him for consolidating the newly founded empire, they could be of great service to the Gupta army in its projected campaign against the Śaka Satraps.

There are indications that this system of political alliances by marriages was carried on even further south beyond the Vākāṭaka dominions. We learn from a record of the Kadamba king Kākusthavarman that his daughters were given in marriage to the Gupta and other kings.[40] This king ruled in the Kuntala country which comprised the modern Kannaḍa-speaking districts of N. Kanara, Shimoga, Chitaldroog, Bellary, Dharwar and adjoining districts. As he reigned in the first half of the fifth century A.D. it is not improbable that Chandra-gupta married his son to a Kuntala princess. This receives some sort of corroboration from the interesting fact that certain medieval chiefs of the Kanarese country claimed descent from Chandra-gupta.[41] Reference may also be made in this connection to a tradition, preserved in more than one Sanskrit text, that king Vikramāditya sent Kālidāsa as an ambassador to a Kuntala king.[42] A verse attributed to Kālidāsa represents this king as a *sāmanta* or feudatory king enjoying his life with wine and women, leaving the cares and responsibility of the administration to Vikramāditya. The scholars generally agree in identifying this Vikramāditya with Chandra-gupta II, but while some regard the Kuntala king as the Kadamba ruler Bhagīratha, others take him to be the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena II.[43] As the latter was the daughter's son of Chandra-gupta II, the verse would no doubt be more appropriate in his case, but he never ruled over Kuntala, and there is no reason why he should be called the lord of Kuntala.

39 Cf. V. A. Smith in *JRAS,* 1914, p. 324.

40 *EI,* VIII, 29, 36.

41 *PHAI,* 475.

42 *JBORS,* XII, 458-59; *B. C. Law,* Vol. II, 191; Moraes, *Kadambakula,* 19-22; *NHIP,* VI, 110, 239-40.

43. Cf. references in the preceding footnote. Mirashi takes the Kuntala ruler to be an early member of the Rāshṭrakūṭa family of Mānapura, perhaps 'Devarāja' (*ABORI,* XXV, 45).

Although the medieval traditions cannot be regarded as historical, those cited above lead to a presumption that there was some sort of association between the Guptas and the Kuntala country, and that it probably dates from the time of Chandra-gupta II. There is, of course, nothing surprising in this. We know that Samudra-gupta had advanced up to the very border of the Kuntala country even though he might not have actually invaded it. The dominions of the Vākāṭakas, who were at that time closely connected with the Guptas, almost reached the border of the Kuntala country. No wonder, therefore, that Chandra-gupta should seek to ally himself with the powerful Kadamba rulers of the south by diplomacy and marriage alliance. It would be, however, going too far to suggest that Kālidāsa was sent as an ambassador with the special purpose of contracting such a marriage alliance. The verse of Kālidāsa referred to above hardly suits such a theory.

It must not be concluded from what has been said above that Kālidāsa certainly lived in the court of Chandra-gupta II. This view is held by a large number of scholars, and is no doubt very probable. But the date of Kālidāsa is so uncertain that even now scholars are not wanting who regard him as having lived in the first century B.C. We have equally little information as to whether any other great luminary graced the court of Chandra-gupta II. Our knowledge is singularly deficient in this respect, though there is no doubt about the brilliance of the reign of Chandra-gupta II Vikramāditya.

Some idea of this brilliance may be formed to-day only by a careful examination of the varieties of gold coins[44] issued by him, which almost rival those of his father in point of realistic representation of the figure of the Emperor. The differences in design are often very significant. Thus Chandra-gupta II is represented as slaying a lion in some coins which bear the legend *siṁha-vikrama*. This is undoubtedly a counterpart of the coins in which Samudra-gupta is represented as killing a tiger and is given the epithet *vyāghra-parākramaḥ*. Now this substitution of a lion for a tiger may be taken as based on fact, for by the conquest of Gujarat and Kāthiāwār Peninsula, Chandra-gupta II had opportunity of hunting lions which his father lacked. The figure of Chandra-gupta seated on a couch resembles that of his father playing on a lyre, but instead of the musical instrument he holds a flower in his uplifted right hand with the word *rūpākṛiti* written beneath the couch... This perhaps shows that he was more distinguished by his physical beauty, artistic sense, and love of nature than his talents for music. A new type of coinage showing the king as a rider on a fully caparisoned horse also probably reflects the personal habits of the king. On the whole, as in the case of Samudra-

44 Allan, *CGD*, 24-60.

gupta, the large variety of coins reflects both the martial spirit of the king as well as his peaceful pursuits.

Reference has been made above to some of the officers who accompanied Chandra-gupta in his campaign against the Śakas. The names of a few others are also known. Two feudatory chiefs, *Mahārāja* Trikamala[45] and *Mahārāja* Śrī Viśvāmitra Svāmī,[46] ruled, respectively, near Gayā and Besnagar. Another, *Mahārāja* Svāmidāsa, was also probably his feudatory, though this is doubted by some.[47] He had a *mantrin* (minister) named Śikharasvāmī[48] who is supposed by some scholars to be the author of the famous treatise on polity named *Kāmandakīya-Nīti*.[49]

Although we have no information of the court of Chandra-gupta II Vikramāditya or of any of the 'gems' that adorned it, we have a contemporary account, by a foreigner, of the general state of his kingdom. Fa-hien, the famous Chinese pilgrim, spent more than six years in the dominions of the Gupta Emperor and visited many towns and sacred sites all over India. His brief remarks on what he describes as Madhyadeśa (Middle kingdom), i.e. the region to the east and south of Mathurā, leave the impression of a country enjoying a high degree of peace and prosperity. 'The people', he says,

> 'are numerous and happy; they have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules; only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay (a portion of) the gain from it. If they want to go, they go; if they want to stay on, they stay. The king governs without decapitation or (other) corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined, lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances (of each case). Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they have only their right hands cut off. The king's body-guards and attendants all have salaries. Throughout the whole country the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlic. The only exception is that of the Chaṇḍālas.'[50]

45 Known from an inscription, dated 64, engraved on the image of a Bodhisatva at Gayā (*ASIAR*, 1922-23, p. 169).

46 His name occurs on a seal found at Besnagar (*ASIAR*, 1914-15, p. 81).

47 The date of his copper-plate grant, year 67, has been referred by some to the Gupta Era and by others to the Kalachuri Era (*EI*, XV, 289; *ABORI*, XXV, 159; *IHQ*, XXII, 64; XXIII, 156). The findspot of the inscription is not definitely known, and the city of Valkhā from which the grant was issued cannot be identified with certainty.

48 Cf. Ins. No. 18.

49 *JBORS*, XVIII, 37.

50 Fa-hien started from China in A.D. 399 and returned there in A.D. 414. He spent about six years in Northern India. For an account of his travels cf. FTL. The passage quoted is from pp. 42-43.

It must be admitted that this is an idealized picture which is more to be valued for the general impression it conveys than the detailed specific information it supplies. Fa-hien's attention was almost wholly absorbed by things religious, particularly those connected with Buddhism. He felt little interest in secular affairs, so much so that he has not even cared to record the name of the great Emperor through whose wide dominions he travelled. We may not, for example, accept his specific observations about food as true, except in respect of the religious community with which alone he came into intimate contact. Similarly his remarks about land-tax and penal laws were probably based on what he saw and heard rather than an intensive study of the legal and fiscal system. But his observations about the general happiness and the unrestricted movement of the people, and his personal impression about the beneficent administration conferring peace and prosperity on the people, have a ring of truth and reflect great credit on the government of Chandra-gupta II. His reference to light punishments to criminals offers a striking contrast to the picture drawn by Magasthenes for the Maurya period and Hiuan Tsang for the reign of Harsha. A striking testimony to the peace maintained by Chandra-gupta II is perhaps furnished by the uneventful journey of Fa-hien without any trouble such as brigandage to which Hiuan Tsang was twice a victim.

We know little of the personal life of Chandra-gupta II. In addition to the chief queen Dhruvadevī or Dhruva-svāminī he had another wife, named Kuvera-nāgā. The former bore him two sons, Kumāra-gupta and Govinda-gupta, and the latter was the mother of Prabhā-vatī-guptā, the Vākāṭaka queen. If we believe in the episode of Rāma-gupta, Dhruvadevī must have had a romantic career. She probably used to take part in the actual administration as will be related later.

Chandra-gupta II was also called Deva-gupta. In the Sāñchī inscription (No. 8) of his military officer Āmrakārdava we are told that Chandra-gupta II had the familiar name of Devarāja. Though this meaning was not regarded as certain on account of some lacunae in this part of the record, its correctness is proved by the alternate use of both Chandra-gupta and Deva-gupta as the name of the father of queen Prabhāvatī-guptā in the Vākāṭaka records. It would thus appear that Chandra-gupta II had a second name Deva-gupta, which had a more familiar form, Devarāja.

Chandra-gupta II had perhaps also a third name, Dhāva. This occurs in the Meharaulī inscription of Chandra, and unless we regard it as a mistake for a common word like *bhāva*, it can only be taken as the proper name of the king. The rest of the inscription is, however, very correctly engraved, and it is unlikely that a mistake was

committed here. So like Śāva, a name of his minister Vīrasena,[51] Dhāva might have been a popular name of Chandra-gupta II, provided, of course, we regard him as identical with king Chandra.

The last known date of Chandra-gupta II is 93 (A.D. 412-13), and he did not rule much longer as his son Kumāra-gupta was on the throne in the year 96 (A.D. 415-16).[52] He had thus a long reign of more than 32 years, counting from his earliest known date 61 (A.D. 380-81) which, as noted above, might have been his first or fifth regnal year. In the latter case his total reign period would be more than 36 years.

4. GOVINDA-GUPTA

It is not a little curious that every succession to the imperial throne after Samudra-gupta, though not known to be disputed by rival claimants at the time, forms a subject of keen dispute among scholars of the modern days. The older generation of scholars had no doubt in their minds that Samudra-gupta was succeeded by Chandra-gupta II and the latter by his son Kumāra-gupta. But the episode of Rāma-gupta has already disturbed this equanimity, and the emergence of a new ruler Govinda-gupta threatens to upset it still further.

One of the numerous clay seals discovered long ago amid the ruins of the ancient city of Vaiśālī contains the name of the great queen Dhruvasvāminī, the wife of *Mahārājādhirāja* Chandra-gupta and the mother of *Mahārāja* Govinda-gupta.[53] It was certainly thought unusual that Dhruvasvāminī should be styled the mother of Govinda-gupta rather than of Kumāra-gupta who was then regarded as having succeeded his father Chandra-gupta II. Dr. Bhandarkar drew the 'obvious conclusion that Govinda-gupta was an heir apparent to the Gupta throne and stationed as *yuvarāja* at Vaiśālī'. He also tentatively assigned a brief rule to him between Chandra-gupta II and Kumāra-gupta, and held that he was either ousted by his brother or died a natural death between A.D. 411 and 414.[54] But as there was no positive evidence that Govinda-gupta ascended the throne, it was supposed equally likely that he died before his father. Dr. Aiyangar[55] held the view that Kumāra-gupta was the heir apparent and governor of Vaiśālī, and during his absence Govinda-gupta was appointed in his place; but as the latter was a minor, the queen was acting as the regent. The general view seems to have been that Govinda-gupta was a younger brother of Kumāra-gupta and the governor of Vaiśālī; he was not an heir apparent and never ascended the throne.[56]

51 Cf. Ins. No. 10.
52 Cf. Inscription Nos. 8 and 12.
53 *ASIAR*, 1903-4, p. 107.
54 *IA*, 1912, p. 3; *IC*, XI, 231.
55 *JIH*, VI. Suppl., 60.
56 Allan, *CGD*, xl.

The discovery of an inscription at Mandasor[57] upset all these calculations. It refers to Govinda-gupta in terms which many scholars have taken to indicate that he not only ruled but was a supreme ruler. It is said for example that not only were his feet touched (*āliṅgita*) by the heads of kings whose power had been destroyed by him, but even Indra, the king of gods, was afraid of him. The inscription, dated A.D. 467, records donations made by the son of the general of Govinda-gupta who is referred to as having ruled in the past.

Once we accept the position that Govinda-gupta was a supreme ruler, the Vaiśālī seal appears in a new light and various suggestions naturally offer themselves. It seems to vindicate Bhandarkar's theory that Govinda-gupta ascended the throne shortly after G.E. 93, the last known date of his father, and died before G.E. 96, the earliest known date of Kumāra-gupta. But, curiously enough, Bhandarkar himself seems to have given up this view, for he suggested that Govinda-gupta and Kumāra-gupta were names of one and the same king.[58] His new theory rests mainly upon a type of Kumāra-gupta's coins which has *ku* beneath the left arm of the royal figure and *go* between his feet. Bhandarkar thinks that *ku* stands for Kumāra-gupta and *go* for Govinda-gupta. This is, however, a very weak ground, for the coins in question most probably belong to the reign of Kumāra-gupta II and a symbol like '*go*' also occurs on the coins of Narasiṁha-gupta.[59]

The old theory of Bhandarkar that Govinda-gupta succeeded his father and had a short reign has been revived by others.[60] The main difficulties in accepting this view are the same as in the case of Rāma-gupta. The genealogy of the Gupta kings does not mention Govinda-gupta, and we have no coin issued by him.

It must be pointed out, however, that the general eulogies contained in the Mandasor inscription do not necessarily imply that Govinda-gupta was an independent and supreme ruler; and even if we assume this, it does not necessarily follow that he preceded Kumāra-gupta. This view rests upon the belief based on the Vaiśālī seal that Govinda-gupta was the heir apparent, and as such the elder son of Chandra-gupta II. Such a conclusion is not, however, warranted by the legend on the seal, and it may not indicate anything more than the fact that Govinda-gupta was governing Vaiśālī; for that is sufficient to explain why in that locality Dhruvasvāminī should be called the mother of Govinda-gupta rather than of Kumāra-gupta.

57 Bh. *List*, No. 7.
58 *IC*, XI, 231.
59 *CGD*, 137, 141.
60 *IHQ*, XXII, 286; *IC*, XII, 167.

As soon as we give up the notion, not warranted by facts, that Govinda-gupta was the elder brother of Kumāra-gupta, we may postulate several alternative views. First, he might have rebelled against his brother Kumāra-gupta, or, after his death, against the latter's son Skanda-gupta, and set up as an independent king for a short period. Secondly, he might have ascended the throne during the short interval between the death of Chandra-gupta II and the accession of Kumāra-gupta, or even during the still shorter interval between the death of the latter and the accession of his son Skanda-gupta. It is extremely unlikely that a king who ruled for a very short while about A.D. 413 would be remembered more than fifty years after his death. It is, therefore, more reasonable to hold that Govinda-gupta rose to power about the middle of the fifth century A.D., either by a successful rebellion against his brother Kumāra-gupta, or by seizing the throne after his death when Skanda-gupta was far away fighting with the Hūṇas. This view is more probable as it is in full accord with some known facts of the time to which reference will be made later. Lastly, the possibility is not altogether excluded that Govinda-gupta was not an independent, far less a supreme, ruler, but held a high office like governor, or even a Regent in the old age of Kumāra-gupta. On the whole nothing would justify us in introducing Govinda-gupta as a new king reigning between Chandra-gupta II and Kumāra-gupta I.

5. KUMĀRA-GUPTA

Kumāra-gupta, the son of Chandra-gupta II and Dhruvadevī, ascended the throne about A.D. 414. His known dates, from coins and inscriptions, range between 96 and 136 G.E. (*c.* A.D. 415-55). He had thus a long reign of no less than forty years. There are as many as thirteen inscriptions of his reign, but they convey very little information regarding the political history of the country. As a matter of fact, barring the probable conquest of a part of W. Malwa, no other incidents of his reign are known to us. But this does not necessarily indicate that his achievements were insignificant, or that his reign was of no historical importance. By following an aggressive policy, his father and grandfather had built up a big empire, and it required no little ability on the part of Kumāra-gupta to consolidate and keep intact the rich heritage bequeathed to him. An uneventful reign in his case would rather support his claim to be regarded as a strong ruler of consummate ability who alone could peacefully manage the newly acquired vast dominions for a period of nearly forty years. The coins and inscriptions testify to a regular and stable government, and it is possible that a considerable development in the system of administration was effected by Kumāra-gupta himself. But this cannot be

regarded as certain, as we know so little of the administrative machinery of the earlier period.

Kumāra-gupta performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Whether this indicates any new conquest by him is difficult to say. No such claim is made in any of his records. But his coins have been found in abundance in Western India as far as Ahmadabad and Bhaunagar, and a large hoard was found even in Satara. A few coins have also been found at Ellichpur in Berar. As already noted (pp. 59-60), we have evidence of the extension of the Gupta influence, even perhaps in the reign of Chandra-gupta II, not only in the Deccan but also further south in the Kanarese country. This is perhaps corroborated by the coins, but we should not draw from them any further inference of actual conquest or even military campaign in the Deccan.

It is probable, however, that Kumāra-gupta added a part of Western Malwa to the Gupta Empire. This kingdom was ruled by a line of kings whose names ended in *-varman* and had its capital probably at Daśapura, modern Mandasor, about 60 miles to the north-north-west of Ujjain. Nothing is known of the first two kings Jaya-varman and Siṁha-varman. The third, Nara-varman, is known from two records (Nos. 49, 50) dated A.D. 404 and 417 which describe him to be a very powerful king. One of them gives him the epithet '*aulikara*' which was perhaps the name or insignia of the family as we shall see later. His son Viśva-varman is also described in extravagant terms in a record (No. 51) dated A.D. 423. He and his son Bandhu-varman are referred to in an inscription (No. 52) which requires a more detailed discussion for our present purpose.

This inscription, found at Mandasor, begins with a long description of a guild of silk-weavers who had migrated from Lāṭa (Central and Southern Gujarat) and settled in Daśapura (modern Mandasor). It then abruptly breaks off from this topic and states: 'while Kumāra-gupta was ruling the whole earth'. But before completing the idea by stating what took place during his reign, it goes on to say that there was a powerful ruler named king Viśva-varman, and that during the reign of his son, king Bandhu-varman, a temple of the Sun-god was built by the command of the guild in the year A.D. 436. It then adds that in course of time a part of the temple was destroyed (or damaged) by other kings, and so the guild had it repaired in the year A.D. 473.[61]

At the time when this inscription was first published Kumāra-gupta I was the only known Gupta Emperor of that name whose reign covered the period A.D. 415-55. It was accordingly held that the temple was built in A.D. 436 when Bandhu-varman was ruling in

61 *IC*, III, 379; IV, 262; *SI*, 299, n. 4.

Daśapura as the feudatory of Kumāra-gupta. But in that case the inscription contains no reference either to the Gupta Emperor, or to his feudatory chief at Daśapura, in A.D. 473 when the inscription was actually engraved. It would be somewhat strange that a record should refer to the past rulers and not to the present ones. It seems therefore better to take Kumāra-gupta of the inscription as Kumāra-gupta II, one of whose known dates is A.D. 473-74. It would then follow that the temple was originally built in A.D. 436 when Bandhu-varman was an independent ruler in Mandasor, but at the time of its repair, in A.D. 473, when the inscription was actually engraved, Mandasor had passed into the hands of the Gupta Emperor, Kumāra-gupta II. The annexation by the Guptas must therefore have taken place during the interval between A.D. 436 and 473, i.e. either during the reign of Kumāra-gupta I or not long after his death. In support of this view it may be pointed out that Bandhu-varman is described as a king in more or less the same terms which are applied to his father.

But the view generally held is that Kumāra-gupta of the Mandasor Inscription was Kumāra-gupta I, and Bandhu-varman was his feudatory. Now, in any case we must hold that both Nara-varman and Viśva-varman were independent rulers, for they issued no less than three inscriptions which referred to them as powerful rulers and contained no reference to the Gupta Emperors. It would then follow that the Gupta supremacy was established over this kingdom some time after A.D. 424, the date of the inscription issued by Viśva-varman as an independent ruler, and before A.D. 436, when Bandhu-varman was ruling Daśapura as the feudatory of Kumāra-gupta I. It is difficult to say whether the change in the political status of Daśapura was brought about by conquest or diplomacy, but the credit must go to Kumāra-gupta for rounding off the imperial domains by removing this isolated unit which probably formed a sort of pocket within the Gupta Empire.

Kumāra-gupta assumed the title Mahendrāditya and is referred to as Śrī-Mahendra, Mahendra-siṁha, Aśvamedha-Mahendra, etc. on his coins. Some of his governors and feudatories are known to us from contemporary records. The most important of them was Ghaṭotkacha-gupta, who was the governor of Eran or Eastern Malwa in the year A.D. 435-36. The inscription (No. 17) which contains his name is unfortunately mutilated, but the extant portion seems to indicate very clearly that he was a member of the royal family. He was probably a son or a younger brother of Kumāra-gupta, though the relationship cannot be exactly determined. He is almost certainly to be identified with Ghaṭotkacha-gupta whose name is engraved on a seal found at Vaiśālī. As mentioned above, we have a seal of Govinda-gupta, brother of Kumāra-gupta, in the same place. We

know also of a gold coin issued by one Ghaṭotkacha-gupta, and it is not unlikely that he is identical with the governor of that time. As suggested above, Govinda-gupta might have been a governor under Kumāra-gupta. In that case it is significant to note that both these governors of the Imperial family assumed independence, though probably only for a short time; for the one is referred to as king in a single record, and the other is known as such from a single coin Perhaps this took place after the death of Kumāra-gupta, and we shall discuss it in connection with the accession of Skanda-gupta. Another governor of Kumāra-gupta was Chirāta-datta (Nos. 20-21) who was ruling Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* i.e. N. Bengal in the years 124 and 128 (A.D. 443, 447).

It is generally believed that the reign of Kumāra-gupta closed in a period of troubles. But this is very doubtful as we shall see later. So far as positive evidence goes there is nothing against the assumption that he died peacefully in A.D. 455.

6. SKANDA-GUPTA

(*i*) *Early history*

Skanda-gupta ascended the throne in 136 G.E. (A.D. 455-56), the very year in which his father Kumāra-gupta died. But indications are not wanting that his succession was not a peaceful one and that the empire had to pass through a sea of troubles immediately after his father's death, if not even before it. This information is derived from an inscription (No. 30) engraved on a stone pillar at Bhitarī (Ghazipur district). As very important conclusions have been based on this record it would be convenient to begin with a summary of its contents.

After the genealogy in prose the first three verses are devoted to the general eulogy of Skanda-gupta. We learn from v. 4 that 'when he prepared himself to restore the fallen fortunes of his family, he spent a whole night on the bare earth', and then conquered the Pushyamitras (or simply enemies according to a different reading by some scholars), who had developed great power and wealth. According to v. 5, his glory was 'sung in every region by happy men, even down to the children'. V. 6 tells us that 'when his father had died, he conquered his enemies and established again the ruined fortunes of his lineage; and then crying, "the victory has been achieved", betook himself to his mother, whose eyes were full of tears from joy, just as Kṛishṇa, when he had slain his enemies, betook himself to his mother Devakī'. V. 7 repeats that by his own prowess he established again his lineage that had been made to totter, and subjugated the earth. V.8, which is badly mutilated, refers to a severe conflict with

the Hūṇas in which the earth was shaken. The rest of the inscription merely says that Skanda-gupta set up an image of Vishṇu in memory of his father.

The most striking thing in this record is the repeated references to a great calamity which threatened the very existence of the Imperial dynasty. It was tottering to its fall when Skanda-gupta revived its fortunes by defeating the enemy. Now the question arises whether the three references to this calamity point to the same event or to separate incidents. The former view seems preferable. In that case we must conclude from v. 6 that this calamity probably arose, and in any case was certainly averted, *after* and *not before* the death of his father. It may also be inferred that Skanda-gupta was engaged in a severe battle and fared badly at the beginning. The fight with the Pushyamitras, referred to in v. 4, may be regarded as a part of the campaign. Either their invasion brought about the calamity or they took advantage of it to invade the Gupta dominions. The Pushyamitras are mentioned in the Purāṇas as a tribe and have been tentatively located on the bank of the Narmada river. But, as noted above, the reading *Pushyamitra* is not certain, and some scholars prefer to read *'yudhy-amitra'* instead. This would mean that the enemies whom Skanda-gupta defeated are not specifically named and only referred to in general terms.[62]

If we proceed on this assumption we may reasonably hold that the calamity was brought about by a disputed succession leading to a civil war. It is significant that in all the three references to the calamity, the *kula* or *vaṁśa* i.e. family is mentioned, probably emphasizing thereby that the danger threatened the Imperial family rather than the Empire. Apart from this there are other circumstances that lend support to this view. Thus verse 3 of the Junagadh inscription (No. 26) tells us that after his father had died Skanda-gupta made himself the ruler of the earth by his own prowess.[63] A little later, the same record tells us that Lakshmī (i.e. the goddess of sovereignty) of her own accord selected Skanda-gupta as her husband, after having considered and discarded all the other sons of kings. These two passages, written within two years of the accession of Skanda-gupta, seem to indicate that there was a contest for the throne among the members of the royal family in which Skanda-gupta came out successful.[64] This conclusion is corroborated by a new type of coins[65]

62 For other interpretations, cf. *IHQ*, 1961, p. 279.

63 Fleet's translation is somewhat different, as he takes *'ātma-śaktyā'* to refer to Kumāra-gupta (*CII*, III, 62). In my opinion it refers to Skanda-gupta and this verse merely echoes the v. 6 of Bhitarī Pillar Ins.

64 Cf. Goyal, *op. cit.*, 308-13.

65 *CGD*, 116.

issued by Skanda-gupta. In these the king stands facing the goddess Lakshmī, who offers him an uncertain object, probably a ring or a garland; this may be a visual representation of the sentiments expressed in the second passage quoted above from the Junagadh inscription. The two verses and these coins seem to indicate that Skanda-gupta had no natural or legitimate claim to the throne, but obtained it by means of his own valour and prowess.

A clue to this is furnished by a close scrutiny of the genealogy of the Gupta Emperors as given in the Bhitarī Pillar Ins. of Skanda-gupta. It mentions Chandra-gupta I, Samudra-gupta and Chandra-gupta II, along with their chief queens (*Mahādevīs*) but makes no reference to the chief queen of Kumāra-gupta or the queen-mother. It is true that the genealogies do not always refer to the *Mahādevīs*, but in this case the omission of the name of the *Mahādevī* of the father of the reigning king offers a striking contrast to the mention of the *Mahādevīs* of the two kings immediately preceding him, and cannot but be regarded as significant.[66] Reference must also be made in this connection to the Bhitarī Seal which gives a complete genealogy of the Gupta Emperors till the third generation after Kumāra-gupta I. This list omits altogether the name of Skanda-gupta, and mentions, immediately after Kumāra-gupta I, his son Pūru-gupta by the chief queen (*Mahādevī*) Anantadevī.

The omission of Skanda-gupta's name may be explained by supposing that the genealogy, as given in the Bhitarī Seal, was intended only to trace the pedigree of the reigning king and not to give a regular succession of kings.[67] But the other circumstances mentioned above strongly indicate that Skanda-gupta's mother was not a *Mahādevī*. Perhaps for this and other reasons too, the succession to the throne did not normally devolve upon him, but he had to contest it with Pūru-gupta, and probably also with other claimants, as will be mentioned later.

This civil war threatened to ruin the fortunes of the Imperial Gupta family which was almost tottering to its fall, as the Bhitarī Pillar inscription repeats no less than three times. But Skanda-gupta defeated his rivals and seized the throne. Then, as the Bhitarī Pillar Ins. says, Skanda-gupta betook himself to his mother as Kṛishṇa, when he had slain his enemies, betook himself to his mother Devakī. It is held by some that this comparison was suggested by the fact that

66 For a full discussion of this question cf. *JPASB*, XVII, 253; *PHAI*, 481; *NHIP*, VI, 176; *JIH*, XXXVII, 145; XL, 243; XLIII, 219.

67 This view is confirmed by the royal seals of Budha-gupta and Narasiṁha-gupta. One of these two brothers must have preceded the other, but none of them is mentioned in the seal of the other.

Devakī was also the name of Skanda-gupta's mother.[68] It is, however, more plausible that the real point of the comparison was the degrading position of both Devakī and Skanda-gupta's mother before the victories of their sons had raised them to a position of power and prestige.

The course of events suggested above satisfactorily explains some other known facts. As already noted, there are good grounds to believe that both Govinda-gupta, the brother of Kumāra-gupta I, and Ghaṭotkacha-gupta, also closely related to him, assumed the position of an independent king. Another king, Prakāśāditya, known from his gold coins, also probably flourished about this time.[69] If we assume that there was a disputed succession after the death of Kumāra-gupta I, we may easily account for the sudden emergence of so many independent kings. For, as often happens, the war of succession weakened the central authority, and important chiefs took advantage of it to assume independent authority. That their independence was short-lived is easily explained by the fact that Skanda-gupta defeated his rivals and consolidated his position in less than a year after his father's death.

The above reconstruction of the early history of Skanda-gupta is no doubt highly probable. But it can only be regarded as a reasonable hypothesis and by no means an established fact.

(*ii*) *The Hūṇa War*

Although the war of succession and the fight with the Pushyamitras are both at best doubtful, we must admit that Skanda-gupta, at the very beginning of his reign, if not even before it, distinguished himself by military successes which secured the fortunes of his family from an imminent disaster. He gave a further proof of his remarkable military ability by defeating the Hūṇas and thus saving the Gupta Empire from a terrible calamity, if not utter ruin.

The brief reference to this incident in the Bhitarī Pillar Ins. does not convey an adequate idea of Skanda-gupta's achievement. In order to realize its full significance we must study the contemporary history and activities of the Hūṇas who have been justly described as the scourge of mankind. This topic will be dealt with in detail in a separate chapter. It is only necessary to state here that about the time when Skanda-gupta ascended the throne, one branch of the

68 Sewell, *Historical Inscriptions of Southern India*, 349; *SI*, 314, n. 4.

69 *CGD*, li-lii. Both Hoernle and V. A. Smith regarded Prakāśāditya as the title of Pūru-gupta. Allan rejects it on the ground that it is highly improbable that Pūru-gupta was called both Vikramāditya and Prakāśāditya. But as we shall see later, the coins with the title Vikramāditya, attributed to Pūru-gupta, were most probably issued by Budha-gupta.

Hūṇas, known as the Ephthalites or White Huns, had poured across the Oxus valley, conquered Gandhāra, and advanced as far as the Sindhu, if not beyond it, inflicting the most barbarous cruelties on the people. They had also carried their devastations to the west as far as the Danube, and had grown so powerful in Europe that their leader Attila, who died in A.D. 453, was 'able to send equal defiance to the courts of the Eastern and the Western Roman Empire'. The atrocities they perpetrated wherever they went beggar all description, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that vast stretches of populated lands, enjoying plenty and prosperity, were reduced to mere wastes, and, for centuries, heaps of ruins alone marked the sites where stood the capitals of mighty kingdoms and renowned seats of culture and civilization.

From more detailed descriptions of the Hūṇas in contemporary chronicles of the West we can easily imagine the veritable terror inspired by their impending invasion of India among all classes of her people. Fortunately, Skanda-gupta proved equal to the formidable task. Where he met the Hūṇas we cannot say, but there is no doubt that he inflicted such a crushing defeat upon them that for nearly half a century, or perhaps even more, they never dared to cross the Sindhu river and penetrate into the interior of India. It was a remarkable achievement, indeed, to secure India from the ravages of the Hūṇas for more than fifty years. The truth of this is brought home to us when we remember that, being foiled in their attempt against India, they turned towards Persia and, in A.D. 484, the king of Persia was defeated and killed, and the whole kingdom lay prostrate before the barbarians. There is no doubt that India felt a great sense of relief at the news of the great victory of Skanda-gupta, and no wonder that the praise of the great monarch was sung all over the country by men as well as children.

It is particularly noteworthy that the author of the Bhitarī Pillar Ins. mentions Skanda-gupta's victory over the Hūṇas separately as a distinct event, after the fight with the Pushyamitras or the other enemies which was evidently concluded immediately after his father's death. It would therefore appear that the Hūṇa invasion took place later in the reign of Skanda-gupta. But there is one circumstance which goes against this view. In the Junagadh Ins. (No. 26) occurs a verse, somewhat mutilated, which has been translated as follows: 'Whose (i.e. Skanda-gupta's) fame, moreover, even (his) enemies, in the countries of the *Mlechchhas*... having (their) pride broken down to the very root, announce with the words "verily the victory has been achieved by him."'[70] This clearly means that Skanda-gupta

70 *CII*, III, 62.

utterly routed some *Mlechchha* hordes, who were seized with a terror of his name even though they lived in their own country, outside India. The description suits the Hūṇas very well, and in the absence of any evidence that Skanda-gupta had to fight with other non-Indian outlandish (*Mlechchha*) tribes, we may take the passage in the Junagadh Ins. to refer to the Hūṇas. But in that case the war with the Hūṇas must be placed before 138 G.E., the date of the inscription, and most probably before 136 G.E., the date of the appointment of Parṇadatta as the governor of Surāshṭra before which the victory is said to have been achieved. This would mean that the Hūṇas had invaded India probably even before the death of Kumāra-gupta I. One is then naturally tempted to ask whether this is not the great calamity that shook the very foundations of the Gupta Empire to which pointed and repeated references are made in the Bhitarī Pillar Ins. This would admirably suit the whole tenor of that record, except, as noted above, the mention of the Hūṇa war as a separate event after the other incidents. But it is not unlikely that the other wars mentioned in that inscription were sequel to the Hūṇa invasion. Thus we may presume that while Kumāra-gupta I died, Skanda-gupta was engaged in fight with the Hūṇas far away from the capital city, and taking advantage of this situation his rival claimants or the Pushyamitras raised the standard of revolt. But fortunately the campaign against the Hūṇas was soon over, and having returned with his victorious army Skanda-gupta seized the throne without much difficulty after defeating his rivals. The only other alternative to this hypothesis is to regard the *Mlechchhas*, mentioned in the Junagadh Ins., as distinct from the Hūṇas, and to take them to refer to some tribes like the Pushyamitras. But this is far less satisfactory. On the whole, we shall not probably be far wrong if we regard the Hūṇa invasion as the main, if not the sole, source of troubles that brought the Gupta family on the verge of ruin, and sorely tried the abilities of Skanda-gupta at the very beginning of his memorable career.

Some echoes of Skanda-gupta's great victory over the Hūṇas may perhaps be traced in Indian literature. The *Chāndra Vyākaraṇa*[71] illustrates the use of the imperfect tense by the sentence '*Ajayad-Jato* (*or Gupto*) *Hūṇān*' 'The Gupta (or Jato) conquered the Hūṇas'. If we accept the reading Gupta we may undoubtedly take the passage as a reference to Skanda-gupta's victory. But others take the word *Jato* and its variants *Japto* or *Jarto* as the name of a people,[72] and identify them with the Jāṭhs.[73] In that case the passage can be

71 Belvalkar, *Systems of Sanskrit Grammar*, 58.
72 Kielhorn in *NGGW*, 1903, p. 305.
73 Hoernle in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 114.

hardly taken to refer to Skanda-gupta except on the fantastic supposition that the Guptas were Jāṭhs.[74]

The *Kathāsaritsāgara* has preserved a story of Vikramāditya, son of king Mahendrāditya of Ujjain. It is said that he succeeded to the throne on his father's abdication and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the *Mlechchhas* who were overrunning the earth. As Mahendrāditya and Vikramāditya were the titles assumed respectively by Kumāra-gupta I and Skanda-gupta, it has been suggested that the story has preserved the memory of Skanda-gupta's victory over the Hūṇas.[75]

(*iii*) *Reign of Skanda-gupta*

The assumption of the title Vikramāditya was undoubtedly justified by the great achievements of Skanda-gupta. Although we do not know full details of his military campaigns, the inscriptions testify to his great military talents tested in many battles. The continual stress of the wars led to heavy drain on his finances and this is reflected by his coins. His gold coins are few in number in comparison with those of his predecessors, and some of them, but not the heavier coins, reveal depreciation in the purity of gold. But any conclusion about the state of the empire from this fact alone is unwarranted.[76]

But in spite of troubles and difficulties he maintained intact the vast empire inherited by him.[77] Even the distant Kāthiāwār Peninsula, which once formed the dominions of the Śaka Satraps, was now ruled by his governor Parṇadatta. A long inscription (No. 26), engraved by the orders of this official on a large granite boulder near the modern town of Junagadh, throws interesting light on the life and reign of Skanda-gupta. It refers to the selection of Skanda-gupta by the goddess of sovereignty and his defeat of the *Mlechchhas,* as noted above. His next task, we are told, was to appoint the governors of all provinces. In this connection special emphasis is laid on the post of governor of Surāshṭra, and we have a long list of qualifications which must be possessed by him in order to bear the heavy burden. Whether this was introduced merely by way of eulogizing Parṇadatta, who alone was found suitable for the post, or any special importance attached to the border province of Surāshṭra in view of

74 Jayaswal in *JBORS,* XIX, 115-16.

75 *CGD,* xlix.

76 *EHI,* 311. Cf. Goyal, *op. cit.,* 286, n. 5.

77 Allan thinks that towards the end of the reign of Skanda-gupta, or early in that of his successor, the greater part of the Gupta dominions in the west was lost to the dynasty. This view is based on the scarcity of Skanda-gupta's silver coins with the Garuḍa reverse type in comparison with those of Kumāra-gupta I, and the absence of similar coins of his successors (*CGD,* xlix). No definite conclusion is possible on the basis of coins alone and the point has been discussed later in the light of other evidences available.

the Hūṇa invasion or fight with the *Mlechchhas* it is difficult to say. Similarly, we do not know whether the 'appointment of governors of all provinces' is merely a poetic description of an ordinary routine duty, or conveys the idea of a recent political upheaval which left the various provinces in unsettled conditions. This is not an unlikely view if we accept the theory of a disputed succession or civil war at the beginning of Skanda-gupta's reign.

Parṇadatta, the newly appointed governor of the 'Western region', viz Surāshṭra, appointed his son Chakrapālita as the magistrate of the city, which was presumably the capital and stood near modern Junagadh. The same boulder on which this inscription is engraved also contains the famous rock-edicts of Aśoka and an inscription of Rudradāman. From the latter we learn that the city was known in ancient days as Girinagara which is now preserved in Girnār, the name of the hill.

The inscriptions on the boulder at Girnār enable us to trace the history of an irrigation reservoir for nearly 800 years. We learn from the inscription of Rudradāman that the reservoir, known as Sudarśana lake, was formed by building an embankment across the gorge near the boulder on which the inscriptions are engraved. It was first constructed by Chandragupta Maurya and improved by Aśoka. In the year A.D. 150 the lake burst on account of excessive rain, but the embankment was rebuilt, three times stronger, by Rudradāman. But the dam burst again, in the year 136 G.E. (A.D. 455-56). The inscription of Parṇadatta gives a graphic account of the calamity and the measures adopted by his son Chakrapālita to repair the irrigation lake. In the year 137 G.E. (A.D. 456-57) he 'made an immeasurable expenditure of wealth and built an embankment, a hundred cubits in all in length, and sixty and eight in breadth, and seven (?) men's height in elevation. . .' The same Chakrapālita also built a temple of Vishṇu in the year 138 G.E. (A.D. 457-58) when presumably this inscription was set up to commemorate the great achievement.

The Junagadh inscription of Parṇadatta is a reminder that after nearly seven hundred years since the days of the Mauryas, an official appointed by the king of distant Pāṭaliputra was ruling over the Kāthiāwār Peninsula in his name. Once more a royal writ passed current from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. It also tells us that in spite of the stress and storm caused by the wars the government was fully alive to the civic needs of the people. The promptness with which the repair was done at an enormous expense speaks highly of the efficiency and resources of even the most remote provincial government.

While the Junagadh inscription of Parṇadatta holds out before us the picture of a peaceful, prosperous, and stable empire of vast

dimensions, shortly after the accession of Skanda-gupta, a brief record of another governor, in West Malwa, conveys an altogether different view. It is an inscription (No. 31) found at Mandasor and mentions Chandra-gupta II and his son Govinda-gupta in terms already quoted (p. 65). It then refers to Vāyurakshita, the general of Govinda-gupta, and the former's son Dattabhaṭa, the general of king Prabhākara. The object of the inscription is to record some constructions by Dattabhaṭa in *Samvat* 524 (A.D. 467-68). As the last known date of Skanda-gupta is G.E. 148 (A.D. 467-68) the record probably belongs to his reign. Yet it is curious that reference is made to the past kings Chandra-gupta II and Govinda-gupta, but not to Skanda-gupta, the reigning king.

As already noted above, another inscription from Mandasor (No. 52) specifically states that a temple built in A.D. 436 was damaged by other kings and repaired in A.D. 473. This indicates a troublesome state of things in this region between A.D. 436 and 473.

It is not unreasonable to hold therefore that W. Malwa broke off from the Gupta Empire under Govinda-gupta, as E. Malwa probably did under Ghaṭotkacha-gupta. But, as noted above, Skanda-gupta put an end to all these revolts. Evidently, there was probable recrudescence of troubles in W. Malwa towards the very end of Skanda-gupta's reign. In this connection we may refer to the claim made in the Vākāṭaka records that king Narendrasena's commands were obeyed by the lords of Kosala, Mekala and Mālava. Although the date of the Vākāṭaka king Narendrasena is not known with certainty, he is regarded by many as a contemporary of Skanda-gupta.[78] If this view be accepted we may perhaps connect the invasion of Narendrasena with the troubles in Malwa. Either his invasion created the local troubles, or the disaffection of the local chiefs induced him to attack Malwa. In either case Skanda-gupta's empire must have undergone a severe convulsion towards the close of his reign. But it does not seem that Narendrasena secured any permanent gain. His invasion must have been in the nature of a raid, if it took place at all in the reign of Skanda-gupta, who probably soon restored peace in this region.

Except this very doubtful instance we have no evidence that the 'tranquil reign of Skanda-gupta, the lord of hundred kings' as described in an inscription (No. 27) dated A.D. 460-61, was seriously disturbed. Perhaps he left the vast empire in peace and security when he died in or shortly after A.D. 467.

78 Cf. Ch. VII.

Chapter Five

DECLINE AND DOWNFALL OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

1. THE IMPERIAL CRISIS

The history of the Guptas after the death of Skanda-gupta is shrouded in a thick veil of obscurity. Numbers of rulers are known, in some cases with dates, but they cannot be arranged in any genealogical and chronological order which is free from difficulties. Hypothetical schemes that received the general approbation of scholars have been upset by recent discoveries which have created more problems than they have solved. All that is possible, therefore, in the present state of our knowledge, is to present all the known facts, indicate the problems that confront us, and suggest what appears to have been the most probable course of events.[1]

Four royal seals (Nos. 35, 41, 44, 46), found amid the ruins of Nālandā, and one discovered long ago at Bhitarī (No. 34) give the following genealogy of Gupta kings.

Kumāra-gupta = Anantadevī
- Pūru-gupta = Chandradevī
  - Budha-gupta
  - Narasiṁha-gupta = Mitradevī
    - Kumāra-gupta
      - Vishṇu-gupta

1 There is a vast literature on the subject among which the following may be specially mentioned:

(a) R. C. Majumdar in *JPASB*, XVII, 249 (where all previous references are given); *JUPHS*, XVIII, 70; *IC*, X, 172-73.

(b) N. Das Gupta in *B. C. Law*, Vol. I, 617.

(c) A. Ghosh in *IHQ*, XIX, 119.

(d) D. C. Sircar in *IHQ*, XIX, 272.

For the latest view on the subject cf. Goyal whose views are summed up in the genealogical table (*op. cit.*, 402).

These seals do not refer to Skanda-gupta, though we know definitely that he ascended the throne the very year in which Kumāra-gupta I died, and ruled till at least A.D. 467-68. The first problem, therefore, that faces us, is the position of Pūru-gupta *vis-à-vis* Skanda-gupta. All the three possible alternatives have been suggested by different scholars, viz that he is identical with Skanda-gupta,[2] that he ascended the throne immediately after his father's death but was ousted by Skanda-gupta within a few months, and lastly that he secured the throne after Skanda-gupta's death either by removing the legitimate heir or by normal rules of succession, if Skanda-gupta died without any male issue.[3] Each of these has weighty arguments to support it, and none has any decided advantage over the rest. A few gold coins with the name Pūru, and therefore ascribed to Pūru-gupta, were advanced as the chief argument against the identity of Pūru-gupta and Skanda-gupta. For although a king may have two names, as Chandra-gupta II certainly had, it is very unlikely that he would issue coins under different names. But it has been pointed out that the two letters read as *Pūru* are really *Budha*,[4] and these coins must have, therefore, been issued by Budha-gupta and not Pūru-gupta. The principal objection against the proposed identity thus falls to the ground, but the use of two different names of the same king in official documents[5] must also be regarded as very unusual. Chandra-gupta II is no doubt referred to both as Chandra-gupta and Deva-gupta in the Vākāṭaka records, but in the official Gupta records he is always called Chandra-gupta.

2 This has recently been strongly supported by Krishna Deva (*EI*, XXVI, 235) on the authority of the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*. This late Buddhist work, however, cannot be regarded as of much historical value. Krishna Deva's views have been ably controverted by Jagannath (*BV*, VIII, 7).

3 A fourth possibility was suggested by Dr. R. G. Basak (*EI*, XV, 113), viz that there were two branches of the Gupta dynasty ruling concurrently in different parts after Kumāra-gupta. This theory of the partition of the Gupta Empire, as well as late Dr. N. K. Bhattasali's theory that Pūru-gupta succeeded Bhānu-gupta about A.D. 511 (*Eastern Bengal Notes and Queries, Second series,* No. 11, pp. 50 ff) are no longer entertained by any scholar.

4 *IC*, I, 691. I had the legend photographed from a plaster of Paris cast of the coin and then magnified. I have no doubt that the first letter is *Bu* as it is a closed square. The second letter cannot be read definitely as either 'ra' or 'dha' but appears more like the latter. The reading 'Budha' therefore appears more reasonable. The late Mr. R. D. Banerji said that the name 'Pura' was clearly written on some coins in possession of Rai Bahadur Radhakrishna Jalan of Patna. I examined the gold coins which the Rai Bahadur sent me at my request and found no such coins. A friend of mine who also examined the whole collection at Patna assures me that no such coins are there. The name Budha is, however, quite clear on a gold coin recently acquired by the Kalā Bhavan, Banaras.

5 The name Pūru-gupta not only occurs in royal seals, but also in the so-called Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription of Skanda-gupta (*IC*, X, 170).

The answer to the question whether Pūru-gupta ascended the throne before or after Skanda-gupta depends largely upon our view of the political situation immediately after the death of Kumāra-gupta I. If we accept the hypothesis that there was a disputed succession and a civil war, Pūru-gupta must be regarded as the most likely rival candidate by defeating whom Skanda-gupta soon seized the kingdom. That would explain why the descendants of Pūru-gupta who ultimately secured the coveted throne regarded Skanda-gupta as a usurper and omitted his name from the genealogical list.[6]

Our decision in this respect must also be largely influenced by the view we take about king Kumāra-gupta who is known from an inscription dated 154 (A.D. 473-74). It is no doubt very tempting to identify him with Kumāra-gupta, son of Narasiṁha-gupta. But there are difficulties. Budha-gupta, in all reasonable probability, ruled, either before Narasiṁha-gupta, or after his grandson Vishṇu-gupta, for otherwise, apart from serious incongruities,[7] we have to assume an irregular succession which, though not impossible, cannot be regarded as a normal state of things, on which alone, as far as practicable, our hypothesis should be based. Therefore, if we identify the two Kumāra-guptas, the reigns of Narasiṁha-gupta, his son, and grandson must all be accommodated during the ten years or less that intervened between the death of Skanda-gupta and the accession of Budha-gupta. This difficulty would be still further increased if we regard Pūru-gupta also as having ruled after Skanda-gupta. For in that case four generations of rulers would have to be squeezed in a period of less than ten years. Thus the identification of Kumāra-gupta, who ruled in A.D. 473-74, with the son of Narasiṁha-gupta practically precludes the possibility of Pūru-gupta having succeeded Skanda-gupta. But even apart from this, the proposed identity involves serious difficulties as mentioned above and has little to commend itself.

As already noted, it may be legitimately deduced from the Mandasor Inscription (No. 52) that the reigning king in A.D. 473 was Kumāra-gupta, and he may be easily identified with the king who issued the inscription in A.D. 473-74. The last known date of Skanda-gupta is A.D. 467-68 and it is not unlikely that he ruled for a few years more. Thus the most reasonable conclusion seems to be to regard Kumāra-gupta of A.D. 473-74 as his successor. As Budha-gupta is known to have been on the throne in A.D. 476-77 he may be reasonably presumed to be the successor of this Kumāra-gupta. On this

6 If we assume that Pūru-gupta was on the throne for a very short time, it would satisfactorily explain the absence of his coins. For, it would take some time before the coins of the new king could be minted and largely circulated.

7 These have been discussed by me in *JUPHS*, XVIII, 71.

basis we may provisionally reconstruct the history of the period somewhat as follows.

Kumāra-gupta I had at least two sons Pūru-gupta and Skanda-gupta. The former was born of his chief queen and, as such, regarded himself as the legitimate heir to the throne. But the latter was probably senior in age and undoubtedly possessed greater ability, specially as a general. Towards the end of Kumāra-gupta's reign a foreign enemy, probably the Hūṇas, threatened the frontiers of the empire and Skanda-gupta was sent against them. With great difficulty Skanda-gupta completely routed them, but in the meantime his father died and Pūru-gupta ascended the throne. Skanda-gupta, with the victorious army at his back, had probably little difficulty in defeating him and suppressing other rebellious chiefs who took advantage of the situation to declare their independence. Having thus averted a great crisis in the history of the Imperial family Skanda-gupta ascended the throne and ruled till about A.D. 470.

He was succeeded by Kumāra-gupta II who was not destined to rule long. If he were a son of Skanda-gupta, we must assume that either he died young without leaving any heir, or was violently removed from the throne by Budha-gupta. But it is also not unlikely that Kumāra-gupta II was the son of Pūru-gupta[8] and successfully revived the claims of his father. In any case, after about five years' rule he was succeeded by Budha-gupta, son of Pūru-gupta, some time about A.D. 475.

2. BUDHA-GUPTA

Nothing proves more strikingly how strong were the foundations of the Gupta Empire than that it had survived the terrible shocks it had sustained after the death of the two kings bearing the name Kumāra-gupta. It certainly did not come out of the ordeal absolutely unscathed or without any scratch, but the huge imperial structure remained intact with all its paraphernalia. The foundations might have been shaken, but that was invisible to the eye. To all outward appearances the Gupta Empire remained, as it was before, stretching from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, and its frontiers were respected even by the barbarian Hūṇas.

Only six inscriptions of Budha-gupta are so far known to us. These and other contemporary records give us a fair idea of the empire in the last quarter of the fifth century A.D. which is almost entirely covered by the reign of Budha-gupta.

An inscription (No. 36) found at Sārnāth which records the dedication of a Buddhist image in the year A.D. 476-77 describes Budha-

8 For some arguments in favour of this assumption cf. *IC*, X, 172.

gupta as ruling the earth. But beyond such general eulogy we do not get any historical information from this private record, except, of course, the date, which is so far the earliest that we know of Budha-gupta. Two copper-plate grants (Nos. 38, 40) of Budha-gupta have been found in Damodarpur in N. Bengal, one of which is dated in A.D. 482-83. These inform us that Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* or N. Bengal was ruled by his governors Brahmadatta and Jayadatta. As the Gupta officials often enjoyed hereditary posts,[9] it may be easily imagined that these two governors belonged to the family of Chirāta-datta who governed the same province during the reign of Kumāra-gupta I (p. 69) and is known from two grants dated A.D. 433 and 447. All the four land-grants closely resemble one another, showing the unbroken continuity of administration during the long interval filled by the reigns of no less than five different kings. One significant change must, however, be noted. The governors, in the days of Kumāra-gupta I, were called simply *Uparika,* but in Budha-gupta's time they were styled *Uparika-Mahārāja.*

Another governor, Suraśmichandra, was governing the territory between the rivers Narmadā and the Yamunā. Not only had he the title *Mahārāja,* but even his subordinate Mātṛivishṇu, who was apparently the local governor of the district round Eran (Saugor district, M.P.), enjoyed the same title.[10]

Further west, the Kāthiāwār Peninsula was being governed by the members of the Maitraka family who were destined ere long to found a long-lived ruling dynasty, with Valabhī as their capital. We have no positive record of Budha-gupta's suzerainty in this region, as we have in the cases of Bengal, Central India, and Mālwā. But the records of the Valabhī rulers leave no doubt that they recognized the suzerainty of Budha-gupta. As this point is not generally recognized by scholars[11] we may discuss it in some detail.

The earliest land-grant of the Maitrakas, issued by *Mahārāja Droṇasiṁha* in 183 G.E. (A.D. 502-3)[12] begins with the simple phraseology acknowledging the authority of the suzerain lord (*Paramabhaṭṭāraka*), whose name is not mentioned. It is not till 23 years later that we come across, for the first time, the historical preamble,[13] which is repeated in the subsequent grants. It begins by saying that

9 A minister of Chandra-gupta says that the position he held was acquired by hereditary descent (Ins. No. 10). The son of a minister of Chandra-gupta II became a minister of Kumāra-gupta (Ins. No. 18). General Bhaṭārka of Valabhī was succeeded by his son Dharasena. There are other instances also.

10 Cf. Ins. No. 39.

11 Cf. e.g. *PHAI,* 489-90, Mirashi in IHQ, XXI, 81.

12 *EI,* XVII, 17.

13 *EI,* XI, 106.

in the lineage of the Maitrakas was born the general (*senāpati*) Bhaṭakka (called Bhaṭārka in later grants) who obtained the glory of royalty by the strength of the array of devoted hereditary servants and friends. His son was the general (*senāpati*) Dharasena. His younger brother was the *Mahārāja* Droṇasiṁha whose anointment to the kingdom was performed by the paramount sovereign in person. His younger brother *Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja* Dhruvasena, who meditated on the feet of the paramount lord, issued the grant in the year A.D. 525-26.

The Valabhī records show that during the last quarter of the fifth century A.D. Bhaṭārka, a general of the army, became the governor of Surāshṭra, probably in succession to Parṇadatta (p. 75). He was succeeded by his son Dharasena, as was the normal practice in Gupta times. Neither Bhaṭārka nor Dharasena assumed independence, and styled themselves simply as general. Droṇasiṁha, the younger brother of Dharasena, was consecrated as a feudatory ruling chief by the Emperor in person, and assumed the title *Mahārāja*. The title, as well as the allegiance to the Emperor, was continued by the next ruler Dhruvasena I, whose known dates range from A.D. 526 to 545. After that the Valabhī grants do not contain the phrase acknowledging the suzerainty of the Emperor.

No doubt can possibly be entertained that the *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* to whom the rulers of Valabhī owed allegiance was the Gupta Emperor.[14] As Droṇasiṁha ruled in A.D. 502, his two predecessors may be regarded as having flourished during the reign of Budha-gupta. Whether the Emperor who anointed Droṇasiṁha was Budha-gupta or his successor cannot be determined, but it is certain that up to the very end of Budha-gupta's reign the Gupta suzerainty was acknowledged, both in theory and practice, by the Maitraka rulers of Valabhī.

The absence of any reference to the Emperor's name perhaps indicates the growing influence of the Maitraka rulers, and the considerable decline in the power and prestige of the Gupta Emperors in Surāshṭra, since the days of Skanda-gupta. A similar phenomenon is observed in the case of the feudal principality ruled over by *Mahārāja* Hastin. Four copper-plate grants (Nos. 53-56) of this ruler, ranging in date between A.D. 476 and 517, begin with the date followed by the phrase, 'in the enjoyment of sovereignty by the Gupta kings'. Here, again, the name of the Gupta Emperor is not mentioned, but there can be no doubt that Hastin acknowledged the suzerainty of Budha-gupta. *Mahārāja* Hastin is said to have been born in the family of *Nṛipati-Parivrājaka* (king-ascetic) Suśarman, and hence the

14 Cf. *IC*, V, 409-10.

royal family is referred to by modern scholars as the Parivrājaka, though the name is not used as a family designation by Hastin or his son. The Parivrājaka kingdom must have comprised the modern Nagod State in the Baghelkhand division of Central India and the region round it.

Although the name of the Gupta Emperor is not mentioned, the date of *Mahārāja* Hastin shows that he acknowledged the suzerainty of Budha-gupta.[15] His three immediate ancestors are named in his grant with the title of *Mahārāja*, and they may all be taken as feudal chiefs of the Gupta Emperors. Perhaps the Gupta supremacy was established in this region by Samudra-gupta and continued ever since without any break.

Contiguous to the Parivrājaka kingdom lay another with Uchchakalpa as the capital. A record on a stone pillar at Bhumara (No. 59), about 9 miles to the north-west of Uchahara (or Uñchahra) in Nagod, shows that it marked the boundary between the two kingdoms. King Jayanātha, whose son Sarvanātha was a contemporary of *Mahārāja* Hastin, issued grants without any reference to any overlord, but he and his four immediate ancestors are all styled *Mahārāja*. The two copper-plate grants of Jayanātha (Nos. 60-61) bear the dates 174 and 177. These years are generally referred to the Gupta Era, though some are inclined to refer them to the Kalachuri Era.[16] If we accept the former view, Jayanātha would be a contemporary of Budha-gupta. But as the grants contain no reference to any allegiance to the Guptas, we cannot say whether Jayanātha acknowledged the suzerainty of Budha-gupta or not. It is held by some scholars that Vyāghra, the father of Jayanātha, is identical with the ruler of the same name who is known from two inscriptions to have been a feudatory of the Vākāṭaka ruler Prithivīshena.[17] They accordingly regard Jayanātha and his son also as feudatories of the Vākāṭakas. It is suggested that the first three Uchchakalpa rulers were feudatories of the Guptas, but on account of the invasion of the *Vākāṭaka* ruler Narendrasena, Vyāghra transferred his allegiance to the Vākāṭakas in

15 A number of silver coins with the legend *Sri Raṇa Hasti* (*Srī Raṇa Hastī*?) have been found in Rājputāna, at Kanauj, and a few other places in the Uttar Pradesh (*CCIM*, 118). Mr. R. D. Banerji thinks that these coins were issued by the Parivrājaka *Mahārāja* Hastin (*AIG*, 63). But this attribution is doubtful. The find-places of the coins are outside the dominions ruled over by Hastin, and they certainly do not resemble any of the Gupta types which were used by the Hūṇas, Maukharis and other powers that rose on the break-up of the Gupta Empire. It may also be considered whether Raṇa-Hastī does not refer to the elephant which is depicted on the reverse, rather than to Rānā Hastin, as V. A. Smith construes it (*CCIM*, 118).

16 *CI*, XXIII, 171.

17 Cf. Chapter VII.

the second half of the fifth century A.D.[18] The uncertainty of the date of Narendrasena has been mentioned above, and so far as the history of the Vākāṭakas is known, it is doubtful if they could maintain their hold on the Uchchakalpa kingdom when the region practically surrounding it on all sides acknowledged the supremacy of the Guptas. It is, therefore, probable, though by no means certain, that the Uchchakalpa kingdom also formed a part of Budha-gupta's empire.

The absence of any reference to the Gupta Emperor in the land-grants of the Uchchakalpa kings is regarded as the chief objection to the view that they were feudatories of the Guptas. The same objection, however, applies equally well to the other view which takes them to be feudatories of the Vākāṭakas, for no reference to the latter occurs in their land-grants. This objection, however, loses much force when we remember that there are several other cases where allegiance to the Guptas has almost certainly to be admitted even without any clear reference to it.

The first is the Paharpur copper-plate (No. 37) dated A.D. 478-79 issued from Puṇḍravardhana. This city (and province) is definitely known from the grants of Kumāra-gupta I and Budha-gupta to have been ruled by their governors. Yet in this grant no reference is made to Budha-gupta or even to Gupta sovereignty. Only there is a passing reference to the merit accruing to the *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka* from the pious grant.

Secondly, there are two copper-plates[19] of *Mahārāja* Lakshmaṇa, issued from Jayapura, in the year 158 which has been referred to the Gupta Era. The findspots of the plates and the identification of a place-name contained therein indicate the region near Allahabad to have been the territory ruled over by Lakshmaṇa. It is difficult to believe that this kingdom lay outside the Gupta Empire.

Thirdly, we have two copper-plates of *Mahārāja* Subandhu whose capital was Māhishmatī on the Narmadā.[20] One of the grants is dated in the year 167 which is generally referred to the Gupta Era though some scholars suggest Kalachuri Era instead.[21] If it is referred

18 *EI*, XXIII, 173.
19 *EI*, II, 364; *ASIAR*, 1936-37, 88.
20 *EI*, XIX, 261; *IHQ*, XXI, 81.
21 Mirashi refers this date and the years 67 and 107 of the grants of *Svāmidāsa* and Bhuluṇḍa (*EI*, XV, 286) to the Kalachuri Era, though all these are generally referred to the Gupta Era. His principal argument is that if Svāmidāsa, Bhuluṇḍa, and Subandhu 'were the feudatories of the Guptas, it looks strange that unlike other feudatories, they do not name their suzerain.' But the examples quoted above take away much of the force of this argument. The findspots of the grants of Svāmidāsa and Bhuluṇḍa are not known, and hence we cannot be quite sure if they were feudatories of the Guptas. But the epithet *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pādānudhyāta* seems to indicate this possibility, for no one other than a Gupta Emperor is known to have been referred to in this

to the Gupta Era, Subandhu would be a contemporary of Budha-gupta, one of whose provinces or feudal States is said to have extended from the Yamunā to the Narmadā river. As such we should take Subandhu of Māhishmatī also as one of his feudatories. It may be noted in passing that if the date is referred to the Kalachuri Era, Subandhu's date would fall in the early part of Kumāra-gupta's reign. It is difficult to believe that Subandhu was an independent chief at that time, and yet no reference is made to Gupta sovereignty.

The first grant mentioned above clearly shows that the absence of any express reference to the Gupta sovereignty, or to any suzerain power, need not necessarily imply that the State in question was independent or did not acknowledge the suzerainty of Budha-gupta. Thus the Uchchakalpa rulers as well as kings Lakshmaṇa and Subandhu may all be regarded as feudatory to the Guptas. There are thus no good grounds to believe that the Gupta Empire had suffered appreciably in extent since the days of Skanda-gupta and we may reasonably hold that Budha-gupta's suzerainty was acknowledged from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. This is in full accord with the fact that he was the last Gupta Emperor to assume the title of Vikramāditya.

There is, however, no doubt that the power and prestige of the Gupta Emperors showed visible signs of decline. The assumption of the title *Mahārāja* by the governors of Bengal, Malwa, and Surāshṭra, and only vague references to Gupta sovereignty in the grants of the Parivrājaka *Mahārājas* all clearly point out in this direction. In the case of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī we can clearly trace the different stages in the process of this decline, and perhaps the same thing is true of many other provinces.

The coins of Budha-gupta also reflect the decline that set in in the Gupta Empire. His gold coins are very rare,[22] and he discontinued issuing the type of silver coins current in Gujarat and Kāthiāwār.

Budha-gupta's reign thus ushered in the first stage of decay. The imperial structure remained intact, but its vitality was weakened by the fatal tendency to local autonomy which slowly but steadily gathered force among the provincial satraps and feudatory rulers. Allegiance was still paid to the suzerain, but the sense of imperial unity was subordinated either to local patriotism and narrow regional

way in that age. On the same ground Rudradāsa, who issued a grant in the year 117, bearing close resemblance in many details to those of Svāmidāsa and Bhuluṇḍa, may also be regarded as a feudatory of the Guptas. For Mirashi's view cf. *ABORI*, XXV, 159 (which also gives an account of the grant of Rudradāsa), *PIHC*, VII, 62 and *IHQ*, XXI, 79. For further discussion of his view cf. *IHQ*, XXII, 64; XXIII, 156.

22 Cf. n. 4 above.

interests or to selfish ambition and love of power. As we have seen, Samudra-gupta laid down the policy by which the independent States were integrated into a vast empire through different stages. Now the reverse process set in, and different parts of the empire started on the long journey towards their cherished goal of independence, travelling along different routes and passing through different stages. There is nothing to show that Budha-gupta was in any way specially responsible for this. The Gupta Empire followed the way of all empires, not only in India but also outside it, though some historical incidents such as the Hūṇa inroads, civil war, or the Vākāṭaka invasion might have hastened the process.

As noted above, the earliest known date of Budha-gupta is A.D. 476-77. Some of his coins bear the date 175 (A.D. 494-95), but on others the decimal figure of the date may be doubtfully read as 80 while the unit figure cannot be read with certainty.[23] The date of these coins may therefore be anything between 180 and 189 (A.D. 500-9). Some scholars have referred to a passage in *Skanda-Purāṇa* according to which Budha-gupta was ruling in A.D. 499.[24] On the whole we may regard Budha-gupta as having died about A.D. 500.

3. VAINYA-GUPTA AND BHĀNU-GUPTA

According to the official genealogy of the Gupta Emperors, supplied by the royal seals, Narasiṁha-gupta, the brother of Budha-gupta, his son Kumāra-gupta (III), and grandson Vishṇu-gupta ruled in an unbroken line of succession (p. 78). If, for reasons stated above (p. 80), we have been correct in our assumption that Budha-gupta preceded Narasiṁha-gupta on the throne, we would normally expect that he was succeeded by Narasiṁha-gupta, and the latter by his son and grandson. But this view can hardly be reconciled with the fact that at least two kings, Vainya-gupta and Bhānu-gupta, are known to have ruled in the first decade of the sixth century A.D. We must therefore discuss their position before continuing the history of the main line.

A copper-plate (No. 45) found at Gunaighar, about 18 miles to the north-west of Comilla (East Bengal), records a gift of land by *Mahārāja* Vainya-gupta from the camp of victory at Krīpura in the current Gupta year 188 (A.D. 506).[25] The grant was made at the instance of his vassal *Mahārāja* Rudra-datta, and the *Dūtaka* (Royal Messenger) was *Mahārāja Vijayasena* who possessed several official

23 *IA*, XVIII, 227.

24 *PAIOC*, VII, 576.

25 Normally the Gupta year would correspond to A.D. 507 (S.I.², p. 340), but according to the calculation of K. B. Pathak the date is equivalent to 13 December, A.D. 506 (*IHQ*, VI, 47).

titles of high distinction and had several *Kumārāmātyas* under him. All these indicate that though styled only a *Mahārāja,* Vainya-gupta occupied an almost independent position and a high rank and power. This is confirmed by the discovery that a class of gold coins, hitherto attributed to an otherwise unknown king Chandra-gupta III Dvādaśāditya, were really issued by Vainya-gupta, the two letters *vai* and *nya* being till then wrongly read as *Cha* and *dra*.[26] Lastly, a small fragment of a seal (No. 46) of Vainya-gupta has been found at Nālandā. It shows that all his ancestors had names ending in Gupta and that his mother was a *Mahādevī*. What is more interesting, he is given the epithet *parama-bhāgavata* which was borne by many Gupta Emperors from the time of Chandra-gupta II, though in the Gunaighar grant he is called a devotee of Mahādeva.

There is thus no doubt that Vainya-gupta belonged to the Imperial Gupta family. It is unfortunate that in the Nālandā seal we just miss the proper name of his father, though the concluding part 'Gupta' is still extant. But there seems to be a trace of *u-kāra* just before the name-ending Gupta, and it is very likely that the missing name of Vainya-gupta's father is Pūru-gupta.[27] In that case, it is probable that Vainya-gupta was at first appointed a provincial governor of Bengal by Budha-gupta, and then he ascended the imperial throne in or some time after A.D. 506.[28] The date of the death of Budha-gupta has to be shifted accordingly.

The history of Bhānu-gupta is more uncertain. He is known from a single inscription (No. 47) engraved on a stone pillar at Eran (Saugor district, M.P.). It mentions 'the glorious Bhānu-gupta, the bravest man on the earth, a mighty king', and then records that in the year A.D. 510-11 Goparāja, who came with him, 'fought a very famous battle and died, and his wife accompanied him on to the funeral pyre'.

It is evident that a famous battle was fought by Bhānu-gupta near about Eran. But we do not know the name of his adversary and the result of the battle. Nor have we any means to determine the exact status of Bhānu-gupta. He is called a *rājā,* but the same epithet is expressly applied to Goparāja's father and grandfather and, by

26 *IHQ*, IX, 784.

27 *IHQ*, XXIV, 67.

28 This assumption is not free from difficulties. For, if Vainya-gupta had issued the Gunaighar plate while he was a governor, it is strange that no reference is made to the Emperor in the official record. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Gunaighar grant was issued after Vainya-gupta had already ascended the throne. But in that case the title *Mahārāja* is difficult to explain. We must hold either that it was inadvertently put for *Mahārājādhirāja* or that on account of Hūṇa invasions, or partition of the Empire (between Bhānu-gupta and Vainya-gupta), or other reasons, the Gupta king had to renounce the higher title for the time being. The latter view is, however, very unlikely.

implication, also to him. Except the name-ending Gupta, there is nothing to indicate that he was an independent ruler or a member of the Imperial Gupta family. No coin or seal of him has as yet come to light. For all we know, he might have been a general of the Gupta Emperor Vainya-gupta. As the Hūṇas are known to have occupied the region round Eran about this time, it is likely that Bhānu-gupta fought with them. Evidently he was defeated, for otherwise his victory would have been described in glowing terms. But this cannot be regarded as certain, for being of the nature of a memorial to Goparāja and his wife, it need not have referred to subsequent events unconnected with them.

If, as is generally assumed, Bhānu-gupta was a Gupta Emperor, it is more reasonable to hold that there was a partition of the Gupta Empire after the death of Budha-gupta—Vainya-gupta ruling in the east and Bhānu-gupta ruling in the west. The alternative view is to suppose that Vainya-gupta had a very short reign and was succeeded by Bhānu-gupta. But so long as there is no clear evidence that Bhānu-gupta was a Gupta Emperor, we need not indulge in any hypothetical discussion about his position in the Imperial family. He undoubtedly fought on behalf of the Gupta Empire, but most probably as a general or a feudatory of Vainya-gupta, rather than as its suzerain lord.

We may thus provisionally accept Vainya-gupta as the sole heir to Budha-gupta's empire. This view is in accord with the fact that the Maitrakas of distant Kāthiāwār still recognized the suzerainty of the Gupta Empire. It is doubtful if even a nominal allegiance would have been paid to one who ruled over only a part of the Gupta dominions.

Although we have no direct evidence, it may be presumed that Toramāṇa, who was probably the leader of the Hūṇas, invaded the Gupta Empire during the rule of Vainya-gupta and had at least a temporary success. This follows from a comparison of two inscriptions found in two neighbouring temples at Eran, one of which (No. 39) is engraved on a stone pillar and the other (No. 68) on a colossal red sandstone statue of a Boar. Now, the first of these, dated A.D. 484-85, records the erection of a flag-staff (i.e. the pillar on which it is engraved) by *Mahārāja* Mātṛivishṇu and his younger brother Dhanyavishṇu and mentions Budha-gupta as the suzerain king. The second inscription records the building of the temple (in which the Boar stands) by Dhanyavishṇu, the younger brother of the deceased *Mahārāja* Mātṛivishṇu in year 1, while the *Mahārājādhirāja* the glorious Toramāṇa was governing the earth. These two records leave no doubt that some time after A.D. 484-85 Eran, which formed an integral part of the Gupta Empire since the days of Samudra-gupta,

passed into the hands of Toramāṇa. As Dhanyavishṇu was alive in A.D. 484-85 as well as at the time of Toramāṇa's conquest, the latter event most probably took place not later than A.D. 520 and perhaps much earlier, during the reign of Vainya-gupta.

The Hūṇa invasions will be dealt with in detail in Chapter IX. Here it will suffice to say that Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula were very powerful rulers and conquered a large part of North-western and Central India. But Mihirakula was defeated by two Indian rulers Yaśodharman and Bālāditya and after him the Hūṇa power declined in India.

4. NARASIṀHA-GUPTA BĀLĀDITYA

(i) *Defeat of Mihirakula*

Bālāditya, who defeated Mihirakula, may be identified with the Gupta Emperor Narasiṁha-gupta, son of Pūru-gupta (p. 80), for we know from his gold coins that he assumed the title Bālāditya. In that case we should assume that Vainya-gupta was succeeded by Narasiṁha-gupta, probably his brother, some time about A.D. 515.

Narasiṁha-gupta ascended the throne at a time when the Gupta Empire was beset by great perils. The successful invasion of Toramāṇa had dealt a rude blow to its power and prestige. There was probably also an invasion by the Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa who claims to have exercised political authority over Mālava, Gujarat and other countries. But as his date is not known with certainty, we cannot say when he invaded the Gupta Empire. Then followed the invasions of Toramāṇa's son Mihirakula which threatened the very existence of the Gupta Empire.

Mihirakula established his authority in the Gwalior region as we know from an inscription (No. 69) dated in the 15th year of his reign. According to a tradition preserved by Hiuan Tsang, his contemporary Gupta Emperor seems to have been Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya. The long story recorded by Hiuan Tsang may be summed up as follows:[29]

> 'Some centuries ago Mihirakula established his authority in Śākala (Sialkot, Panjab) and ruled over India. He issued an edict to destroy all the Buddhist priests and overthrow the law of Buddha throughout India.
>
> 'Bālāditya-rāja, king of Magadha, profoundly honoured the law of Buddha. When he heard of the cruel persecution and atrocities of Mihirakula, he strictly guarded the frontiers of his kingdom and

29 *HTB*, I, 167 ff.

refused to pay tribute. When Mihirakula invaded his dominions, Bālāditya took refuge with his army in an island. Mihirakula left the main part of his army in charge of his younger brother, embarked on boats, and landed with a part of his troops on the island. He was, however, ambushed by the troops of Bālāditya in a narrow pass and was taken prisoner. Bālāditya resolved to kill Mihirakula, but released him on the intercession of his mother. Mihirakula found on his return that his brother had gone back and occupied the throne. He, therefore, sought and obtained an asylum in Kashmir. Then he stirred up a rebellion there, killed the king, and placed himself on the throne of Kashmir. He next killed the king of Gandhāra, exterminated the royal family, destroyed the *stūpas* and *saṅghārāmas,* plundered the wealth of the country and returned. But within a year he died.'

There are certain elements in this story which justify us in doubting its truth. In the first place Hiuan Tsang refers to Mihirakula as having flourished 'centuries ago', though the interval between Mihirakula's death and Hiuan Tsang's visit to India could scarcely have exceeded one hundred years. The manner in which Mihirakula is said to have been captured and subsequently released also reads more like a romance than sober history. On the other hand we should remember that not unoften such legends grow around genuine historical facts, and Hiuan Tsang's reference to 'some centuries' may be a clerical error or due to inadvertence.

The recent discovery of an inscription at Nālandā[30] seems to confirm Hiuan Tsang's story. This inscription belongs to the middle of the eighth century A.D., but it refers to a great and extraordinary temple built by an old king named Bālāditya. He is described as 'the great king of irresistible valour, who vanquished all the foes and enjoyed the entire earth'. The inscription refers to the great height of the temple by saying that 'it was erected as if with a view to see the Kailāśa mountain surpassed'.

Now, Hiuan Tsang also refers in some detail to the three-storied *saṅghārāma* built by Bālāditya at Nālandā.[31] There can hardly be any doubt, therefore, that the same king is referred to by Hiuan Tsang and the author of the inscription. Thus two independent sources confirm the tradition that Bālāditya of Magadha was a powerful ruler and a great conqueror, and in these circumstances we may place more credence in the main story of Hiuan Tsang than otherwise would have been possible. Thus, leaving aside all details, we may well

30 *EI*, XX, 37.
31 *HTB*, II, 168-69.

believe that Bālāditya defeated Mihirakula, and saved the Empire for the time being.[32]

As will be related later, a chief called Yaśodharman is also said to have defeated 'Mihirakula, whose head had never been bent in obeisance to any other save the god Śiva'.[33] It is possible that the two defeats, mentioned in two different sources, really refer to one and the same event.[34] In other words, Yaśodharman fought against Mihirakula on behalf of, or along with, Bālāditya, as his feudatory or general, and when later he gained the position of an independent sovereign he took the credit to himself alone without any reference to the suzerain king. The other alternative is to suppose that first Yaśodharman and then Bālāditya defeated Mihirakula in separate engagements, and perhaps in different regions. This follows from the statement in Yaśodharman's *praśasti* that he defeated even Mihirakula who never before submitted to anybody. Such a statement would be hardly appropriate if Mihirakula had been already defeated by Bālāditya.[35]

But it is difficult to believe that Narasiṁha-gupta lived long enough after Yaśodharman to fight successfully against Mihirakula. As will be seen later, Yaśodharman was in full glory in the year A.D. 532, when the Gupta Empire existed, if at all, only in name. At that time

32 It was suggested by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri (*PHAI*, 504-5) that Bhānu-gupta was also called Bālāditya, and to him belongs the credit of having defeated Mihirakula. Jayaswal later propounded the same view with a great deal of embellishment (*IHIJ*, 53 ff). The basis of this view is the statement in the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa* that a king whose name begins with the letter *pa* was the son of one whose name begins in *bha*. These two are assumed to be Prakaṭāditya and Bhānu-gupta, and as an inscription found at Sārnāth (*CII*, III, 285) refers to a king called Prakaṭāditya, son of Bālāditya, the latter is held to be a *biruda* of Bhānu-gupta. Such arguments are obviously very weak, and the cryptic statements in the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*, whose representation of historical facts is neither methodical nor easily intelligible, can hardly be relied upon. Jayaswal's elaborate reconstruction of history based on this work may be described, without much exaggeration, as imagination running riot. It hardly deserves consideration in a sober history.

33 Cf. Mandasor Ins. No. 70. Fleet's translation of v. 6 is wrong. He takes the adjectival phrases quoted in the text to refer to Yaśodharman, whereas they really refer to Mihirakula. Cf. Sircar, *SI*, 395, n. 1.

34 Such a possibility has been hinted at by other scholars (cf. *CGD*, lix) who have, however, assumed that Yaśodharman must have been an independent king at the time he defeated Mihirakula. They were therefore troubled by the discrepancy between Hiuan Tsang's statement and Yaśodharman's inscription. But the view suggested above reconciles the two statements.

35 Allan, ignoring the point, suggests that Narasiṁha-gupta was simply successful in defending Magadha against Mihirakula's aggressions, and that Mihirakula was afterwards utterly routed and taken prisoner by Yaśodharman (*CGD*, p. lix). Thus he attributes to Yaśodharman a feat expressly ascribed by Hiuan Tsang to Bālāditya. Cf. *IHQ*, III, 1.

Narasiṁha-gupta must have been a very old man. For his father Pūru-gupta must have died before A.D. 477, the known date of his son Budha-gupta, and probably even before A.D. 474, the date of Kumāra-gupta II. Even if we believe that Narasiṁha-gupta was born only a few years before his father's death, he must have been well above 60 years in A.D. 532. It is therefore not very likely that his reign was continued much beyond A.D. 532.

On the whole the most reasonable view seems to be the one suggested by Hoernle[36] long ago, that Yaśodharman, as a feudatory chief, helped Narasiṁha-gupta in his war against Mihirakula, and later asserted his independence. It is therefore necessary at this stage to give a detailed account of this great hero.

(ii) *Yaśodharman*

An inscription (No. 70), engraved in duplicate on two stone pillars at Mandasor, contains a long eulogy of Yaśodharman. He is said to have exercised suzerainty over the vast region extending 'from the neighbourhood of the Lauhityā (Brahmaputra river) up to the mountain Mahendra (in Ganjam district), and from Himālaya up to the Western Ocean'. Further, as noted above, even Mihirakula paid homage to him (lit. bowed down at his feet).

The vague and bombastic claims of conquest, with which we are too familiar in Indian inscriptions, cannot of course be taken at their face value. They are belied by the fact that the Gupta Empire survived Yaśodharman. But we may readily take it for granted that he made extensive conquests.

More interesting is the specific reference to Mihirakula. It may be accepted as a historical fact that Yaśodharman inflicted a severe defeat upon Mihirakula, though it did not perhaps finally crush his power. It is probable that Yaśodharman rose to power and fame by this great achievement, and subsequently carried his victorious arms to countries which, to quote the words of his *praśasti*, 'were not enjoyed (*even*) by the lords of the Guptas and which the command of the chiefs of the Hūṇas failed to penetrate'.

Further information about Yaśodharman is supplied by another inscription (No. 71), also found at Mandasor. It begins by paying tribute to the tribal ruler (*janendra*) Yaśodharman for his victory over his enemies and then adds: 'And, again, victorious over the earth is this same king of men (*narādhipati*), the glorious Vishṇuvardhana, the conqueror in war, by whom his own famous lineage (*ātmavaṁśa*), which has the *aulikara*-crest, has been brought to a state of dignity that is ever higher and higher.' The record then refers in glowing

36 *JASB*, LVIII, Part I, 96.

terms to the great victories of the latter and makes specific reference to his 'having brought into subjection, with peaceful overtures and by war, the very mighty kings of the east and many (kings) of the north', adding that thereby he carried on high the second name of '*Rājādhirāja* (king of kings) *Parameśvara* (supreme lord)' so difficult to attain.

Now the first question that arises in respect of this record is the relation between Yaśodharman and Vishṇuvardhana. Referring to the expression 'this same king of men', Fleet, who edited the inscription, remarks as follows: 'This expression looks at first sight as if Yaśodharman and Vishṇuvardhana were one and the same person. But the general structure of this verse, as well as the use of the two distinct titles *janendra* and *narādhipati* and of the expression *ātmavaṁśa*, shows that this is not the case. "This same" simply means "this reigning king", in whose time and territory the inscription is written.'[37] Now the distinction between the two titles need not be pressed very far, as both are used to denote kings, and the reference to 'own lineage' does not seem to have great bearing on the question of identity. The real ground in support of Fleet's view is the general structure of the two verses, for it is very unusual indeed to refer to the same king by two different names in this manner. At the same time the identity is clearly hinted by the expression 'this same king of men', and what is said of Vishṇuvardhana applies very well to Yaśodharman as we know him from the Duplicate Pillar inscription found in the same place. Indeed if Yaśodharman be regarded as a separate person, we must presume that he is the overlord of king Vishṇuvardhana mentioned after him,[38] and yet the record leaves no doubt that the latter must be considered as the mightier of the two. This follows not only from the mention of his victories, but also, and specially, from the imperial titles *Rājādhirāja* and *Parameśvara* applied to him. We must, therefore, regard the two as identical and Fleet himself later accepted this view.[39] The original name of the king was apparently Yaśodharman[40] and he assumed the other name Vishṇuvardhana after his victories.

By assuming this identity we can derive from this record a few more particulars about Yaśodharman. In the first place, his main

37 *CII*, III, 155, n. 5.

38 This is the view of Allan (*CGD*, lvii).

39 Fleet's original view (*CII*, III, 155) that the two were different persons was upheld by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar (*JBBRAS*, XX, 392) and Allan (*CGD*, lvii), but Hoernle took them to be identical (*JASB*, LVIII, Part I, 96; *JRAS*, 1903, p. 550). Fleet himself later accepted the identity (*BG*, I, Part II, 312; *JRAS*, 1904, p. 166).

40 This seems to follow from the phrase *Yaśodharma-nāmā* (by name Yaśodharman in v. 5).

conquests were in the directions of the north and east, and these were achieved both by war and diplomacy. The 'very mighty kings of the east' probably included the Gupta Emperor, and it is evidently after defeating him that he assumed the imperial titles *Rājādhirāja* and *Parameśvara*. Secondly, we come to know from this record that his family had the *'aulikara'* crest, and this connects him with the family of Naravarman, grandfather of Bandhu-varman (p. 67), who is called *aulikara* in one of his records (No. 50).

But whatever we might think of this identity, the record supplies a definite date for Yaśodharman. It is the Mālava year 589, corresponding to A.D. 533-34, and if the proposed identity be upheld, we may reasonably infer that Yaśodharman had begun his victorious career, and probably also completed it, before that year. This fits in with the inference drawn above from the Gupta records.

(iii) *General Review*

In the light of what has been stated above the history of Narasiṁha-gupta's reign may be reconstructed somewhat as follows. At the time when he ascended the throne the rapid advance of the Hūṇas constituted the gravest danger to the Gupta Empire. The battle which took place at Eran in A.D. 510-11 was an early episode in the long-drawn struggle with the Hūṇas. We cannot say whether it represents an attempt to resist the advance of Toramāṇa, or an endeavour to drive him out of E. Malwa which he had already occupied. In any case Malwa seems to have been the cockpit of the struggle, and renewed attempts were made by Narasiṁha-gupta to fight the enemy in this region. The struggle was perhaps long and tedious, but ended in a complete success for the Gupta Emperor who was aided in this great hour of national peril by his feudatory chiefs,[41] notably Yaśodharman. The respite of Narasiṁha-gupta was, however, shortlived. In spite of the ultimate success, the Hūṇa invasions extending over nearly a quarter of a century had exhausted the material resources of the Gupta Empire and considerably weakened its moral prestige. As often happens, it was a signal for the feudal chiefs or high officials to assert their independent authority. The most formidable among these was Yaśodharman who was probably a scion of the Varman family that ruled W. Malwa for a long time (p. 68), and who had acquired great prestige and renown by the important rôle he played in defeating Mihirakula. Whether he revolted against Narasiṁha-gupta or declared independence after his death cannot be definitely determined. But there is no doubt that the Gupta

41 Probably Jīvita-gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty and a Maukhari chief fought with him against the Hūṇas as will be shown later in connection with the history of the Later Guptas and the Maukharis.

Empire was overwhelmed for the time being, and Yaśodharman carried his victorious arms over an extensive region in North India. It does not appear, however, that he could consolidate his conquests. He rose and fell like a meteor. How his end was brought about we cannot say. But there is scarcely any doubt that the disintegration of the Gupta Empire, brought about by his victories, released other forces, and these probably wrought his ruin. As we shall see later, the Maukharis and the Later Guptas came into prominence about this time, and probably there were others, too, that followed the example of Yaśodharman. Perhaps the Gupta Emperor successfully contrived to rally these forces against Yaśodharman and brought about the downfall of this powerful rebel. It may also be that Yaśodharman was the first victim to perish in the conflagration which he had himself kindled to destroy the Gupta Empire.

Although Yaśodharman claimed to have established suzerainty over the whole of North India from the Brahmaputra river to the Arabian Sea, the epigraphic evidence clearly indicates that his conquests, whatever may be their nature, did not make any lasting impressions on the political or administrative system which continued more or less in the old way. The long series of Valabhī grants, no less than fourteen in number, issued by *Mahārāja* Dhruvasena between A.D. 525 and 545 are all drawn up in the old style. Due homage is paid to the *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka*, as of old, and this can only refer to the Gupta Emperor. For if either Toramāṇa or Yaśodharman had exercised an effective suzerainty over Valabhī, some changes would have been introduced in the formula, and possibly their names would have been mentioned. Traditional or nominal homage, in vague and conventional terms, is only paid to an old ruling dynasty out of reverence for its past greatness even though it ceased to exercise any real authority, but that honour or privilege is not extended to a new conqueror. If he is weak, he is ignored. But if he is strong, he insists on more positive evidence of his suzerainty.

If we turn from the western to the eastern extremity of the Gupta Empire, we find the same state of things. Five copper-plates were found at Damodarpur in N. Bengal, all recording grants of land in the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*. Two of these were issued in the reign of Kumāra-gupta I and two in that of Budha-gupta. The fifth one (No. 48) was issued in the year 224 (A.D. 543-44) by a king whose proper name is lost, but the name-ending gupta is quite legible. As all the usual imperial titles are added to the name there is no doubt that he was a Gupta Emperor.[42] This inscription proves that even so

42 Formerly when it was held that Narasiṁha-gupta and his son Kumāra-gupta reigned before Budha-gupta, and no Gupta Emperor was known to have ruled any-

late as A.D. 543-44 Bengal was still under the effective authority of a Gupta Emperor, and there was no violent break in the system of administration. Even in the Central part of the Empire, the last known grant (No. 58) of the Parivrājakas, dated 209 (A.D. 528-29) begins as usual with the phrase *Gupta-nṛipa-rājya-bhuktau* 'in the sovereignty of the Guptas'.

We should further remember that gold coins, though debased, still continued to be issued by the Gupta Emperors, whereas so far none has been discovered of Yaśodharman. All these clearly indicate that the imperial fabric reared by Samudra-gupta could not be destroyed by Yaśodharman. But there is no doubt that it was seriously damaged. The centrifugal forces led to a general upheaval all around. The Maukharis and the Later Guptas, whose history will be discussed in detail in another chapter, were gradually laying the foundations of independent States. The rulers of Eastern Bengal had already declared independence, and the Maitrakas were soon to follow suit. These were ominous signs and nobody could mistake the writing on the wall. The question was no longer whether, but when, the great empire would collapse.

The old Emperor Narasiṁha-gupta probably died before the great *coup* of Yaśodharman, but in any case he did not long survive it. It is not unlikely that in his last days, when power was slipping from his grasp, he devoted his attention more and more to religion, and sought the peace of mind in the teachings of Gautama Buddha, to which he was perhaps initiated early in life.[43]

4. *Kumāra-gupta III and Vishṇu-gupta*

The Gupta Empire survived the invasions of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula and the onslaughts of Yaśodharman. Its power and glory had faded, but the memory of its greatness sustained it for a time.

where after A.D. 510-11, he was naturally regarded as belonging to the Later Gupta family (*HBR*, p. 55). There is, however, no excuse for this belief, if we assume that Narasiṁha-gupta was a contemporary of Mihirakula and therefore flourished about A.D. 525.

43 We learn from Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu* that king Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā was a patron of Buddhism and sent his son Bālāditya to study under the great Buddhist scholar. Later, when Bālāditya ascended the throne, he invited his teacher Vasubandhu to Ayodhyā. This Vikramāditya has been identified by some with Pūru-gupta (or Skanda-gupta) and Bālāditya with Narasiṁha-gupta. But the correctness of these identifications rests on the date of Vasubandhu. If he lived in the middle of the fourth century A.D., as is generally supposed, none of the proposed identifications can be maintained. They are also opposed to Vāmana's statement that Vasubandhu was a minister of a son of Chandra-gupta, as noted above (*JRAS*, 1905, p. 33. *NHIP*, VI, 155-56, n. 2). Bhandarkar has identified Govinda-gupta, son of Chandragupta II, with Bālāditya (*IA*, 1912, pp. 1-2).

The substance had passed away, but the shadow lingered for nearly another quarter of a century.

We know the names of only two Gupta Emperors who may be reasonably assumed to have ruled during this period. These were Kumāra-gupta III and his son Vishṇu-gupta, whose reign-periods probably covered the period A.D. 530-50. They are known both from their royal seals and gold coins.

The coins of Kumāra-gupta III, like those of his father Narasiṁha-gupta, may be divided into two classes;[44] 'a small class I of good gold and of a style fairly good for the period, and a class II of very rude workmanship and base metal'. It is generally held that these two classes were probably the issues of different districts. But it may be argued that only the class II coins of Kumāra-gupta, referred to above, really belonged to Kumāra-gupta III, for the known coins of Vishṇu-gupta belong only to class II. In that case the class I coins may be attributed to Kumāra-gupta II. But as against this we should remember that in both the classes Kumāra-gupta is given the title Kramāditya. In any case the debasement of coins which had already commenced in the reign of Narasiṁha-gupta continued in the reign of his son Kumāra-gupta III. Whether he made any attempt to improve it remains doubtful, but in the reign of his son Vishṇu-gupta, only the debased coins were current, and there was no effort to improve the style or standard of gold. This degradation of coinage aptly illustrates the gradual decay of the Gupta Empire.

No political event of the reign of Kumāra-gupta III Kramāditya is known to us. But the records of the Maukharis and the Later Guptas reveal a state of political chaos, leading to strife and struggle all round, which may be partly true of this and partly of the next reign. As Narasiṁha-gupta must have died in advanced age, Kumāra-gupta III had probably a short reign and died about A.D. 540.[45]

Vishṇu-gupta, the son and successor of Kumāra-gupta III, assumed the title Chandrāditya. The Damodarpur copper-plate grant (No. 48) dated A.D. 543-44, referred to above, probably belongs to his reign. The portion of the copper-plate containing the proper name of the king is broken, but as the editor remarks, the missing space would permit of only two letters after *Śrī* and before *gupta*. The editor suggested that the missing name might be *Bhānu*, as he read the date of the plate as 214. But the date being really 224 (A.D. 543-44), 33 years later than the only known date of Bhānu-gupta, it is a more reason-

44 *CGD*, p. ciii.

45 A mission was sent by the Chinese Emperor in A.D. 539 to the court of Magadha, and Paramārtha accompanied this mission to China where he spent the rest of his life (Bagchi—*India and China*, 48-49). The court of Magadha evidently refers to the Gupta Emperor who may be identified with Kumāra-gupta III.

able assumption that the missing name was Vishṇu, for the reign of Vishṇu-gupta falls in this period.[46]

Although the general tenor of this grant is very similar to the four earlier ones, there is one significant difference. The post of the Uparika (Governor) is no longer filled by a person with name-ending *datta* as in the other four grants (Chirāta-datta, Brahma-datta, Java-datta). Instead we have Rājaputra-Devabhaṭṭāraka. Whether this expression merely means something like Prince Royal, or we have to take Deva or Devabhaṭṭāraka[47] as the name of the prince, it is difficult to say. But there is no doubt that the son of the Emperor was now acting as the Governor of Bengal. Perhaps in view of his higher distinction a new phrase is added in the description of the government, viz, infantry, cavalry and the elephants.[48] The reason for this change in administration is not apparent. It may be due to disloyalty of the governors during the late upheaval, or simply a desire to secure the frontier by personal contact. But whatever may be the cause, it proves the effective hold of the Gupta Emperor over N. Bengal. This seems to be rather unusual, as the decline of an empire is almost inevitably preceded by the loosening of its hold on provincial authorities.

We may thus be more or less certain that Magadha (South Bihar) and Gauḍa, or a part of it (N. Bengal), still formed integral parts of the Gupta Empire. It is very doubtful if the actual power of Kumāra-gupta III or Vishṇu-gupta extended much further beyond it. For, as will be shown later, the Maukharis and the Later Guptas were ruling in U.P. and Malwa, and an independent kingdom arose in South and Western Bengal.

How or when the Gupta Emperors lost their last stronghold in Magadha and N. Bengal is not yet known. A thick veil of mystery hangs over the last days of the Imperial Guptas. We have no definite knowledge of any king that succeeded Vishṇu-gupta. Nor do we know what became of his son, Prince Deva, who was ruling N. Bengal in A.D. 543-44.

46 Krishna Sastri suggests that the name is Kumāra (*EI*, XVII, 193, n. 1). In that case he may be identified with Kumāra-gupta III. For other suggestions see Sircar, *SI*, 337 n. 4. His suggestion that the name might be Vishṇu-gupta was already made by P. L. Paul (*Early History of Bengal*, 13-14).

47 The editor of the plate suggests Devabhaṭṭāraka as the proper name, but *bhaṭṭāraka* seems to be an honorary epithet.

48 The exact significance of the phrase *bhogen-ānuvahamānake* following the name of the Governor, in the first four grants of Damodarpur, is not quite clear. It is taken to mean 'prospering under the government of'. But the addition of the words *hasty-aśva-jana* (elephants, horses and infantry) before the phrase in the last grant undoubtedly emphasises the more dignified character of the government.

Various suggestions have been made for the identification of Prince Deva and the addition of one or more kings to the imperial line on the basis of the statements in the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*.[49] A perusal of the text, however, shows that it is a medieval chronicle of very doubtful historical value, and little reliance can be placed on it as an independent source for reconstructing the history of this period. There is no doubt that the author had before him a jumble of historical traditions, made up of facts and fancies, but it is impossible to credit him with even an imperfect knowledge of the correct sequence of historical events and a sense of their proper importance. While, therefore, we may occasionally find in it a corroboration or, rarely, even some amplification of events known from other sources, we shall hardly be justified in taking it as the basis for formulating any view of historical reconstruction.[50]

49 This is the name of a medieval Buddhist text which contains a long chapter on political history. The history is narrated in the prophetic style (as in the Purāṇas) by the Buddha in course of his discourse on the future vicissitudes of his doctrine and church. It has the singular characteristic of referring to the kings by only the initial letter of their names, e.g. H. for Harsha-vardhana, R. for Rājya-vardhana.

The text has been printed by G. Sastri in Trivandrum Sanskrit Series and also by K. P. Jayaswal at the end of his *Imperial History of India* which is almost exclusively based on it. The historical value of the work, also known as *Ārya-Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*, was much exaggerated by Jayaswal and other scholars, and more recently Goyal (*op. cit.*, 372) has followed in their footsteps.

50 Jayaswal's estimate of the value of this work (*IHIJ*, 34) as 'a true history of the Great Gupta epoch', 'sober and fuller', will hardly be endorsed by any historian. The very meagre account that we get from it can hardly be regarded as history, and no amount of ingenuity can make it really accord with facts known from coins and inscriptions. Jayaswal's *Imperial History of India*, based on this work, hardly deserves serious consideration, and is more likely to mislead the unwary than add in any way to our knowledge of ancient history. His views have not, therefore, been refuted in detail.

As regards the Gupta history, of which so much has been made by Jayaswal, and more recently by Goyal, the verse 646 merely mentions king Samudra-Vikrama, good king Mahendra, and after him S-initialled king (i.e. Skanda-gupta). The verse 647 says that S had several names including Devarāja. The next 26 verses (648-73) are devoted to his younger brother (?) (*anuja*) named Bala of the eastern region. He is described as a great patron of Buddhism, and builder of a large number of monasteries, *chaityas*, orchards, reservoirs, gardens, pavilions, roads, and bridges. 'After reigning without any rival and peacefully he becomes a wanderer and finally at the age of 36 years 1 month commits suicide by *dhyāna*. He had become a monk owing to his grief for his dead son.' The stories of the rebirth of Bala are told in 18 out of the 26 verses. The accounts of the later Emperors have been quoted in the text.

This is all that we are told of the Imperial Guptas. By a curious piece of ingenuity Jayaswal finds a reference to Samudra-gupta again in verses 700-7, although the intervening verses, according to him, contain the accounts of the Later Guptas and the Pālas. Those verses seem to refer to a wicked king (*durmati*) Samudra, who ruled for three days or years, and his younger brother named Bhasmama. The detailed

As a typical instance we may consider the account given in the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*[51] of the Gupta kings after Bala. He was followed by Kumāra, the great lord of the Gauḍas who was very religious. Then U-initialled became king (v. 674). After a verse (675) referring to the internal dissension or mutual severance, the chronicle adds:

> 'The separatist Gauḍas will be terrible. Thereafter, (there will be) Deva known as king of Magadha. He, surrounded on all sides by enemies, was suppressed and killed. Immediately next Chandra will perform kingship. He, too, will be severed by weapon on account of former (birth's) deeds. His son Dvādasa (will) live for a few months. He, too, will be severed by weapon while a minor (vv. 676-678).'

Kings Bala and Kumāra in the passage quoted above may be taken to refer to the two kings Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya and his son Kumāra-gupta III. The U-initialled king who followed the latter is so far unknown. He has been identified with Budha-gupta by Jayaswal.[52] It has been suggested by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri that the name is probably Upa-gupta, the existence of such a king being inferred from Upa-guptā mentioned in the Maukhari records as the mother of Īśāna-varman.[53] In that case Deva-Bhaṭṭāraka of the Damodarpur copper-plate might be Deva, son of U-initialled. This leaves out of account Vishṇu-gupta who is now known to be the son of Kumāra-gupta. Accordingly some have suggested the identification of U-initialled with Vishṇu-gupta.[54] An alternative suggestion by Raychaudhuri[55] is that U may be the initial of Upendra and refer to Kṛishṇa-gupta, his successor Deva being Devaśrī Harsha-gupta. This variety of suggestions shows the weakness of each and the difficulty of using the *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa* for reconstructing the Gupta his-

account that follows seems to refer to the latter, though Jayaswal applies it to Samudra. It is hardly possible to regard this Samudra as Samudra-gupta as Jayaswal has done. Even if we do so, the account is not at all flattering to the great Gupta Emperor, and one would hardly agree with Jayaswal that 'the character-estimate of the Gupta Emperors by the Buddhist historian is very valuable and it is fortunately very sound even when the kings were not Buddhists' (p. 34).

No notice has therefore been taken of the hypotheses based on this text, propounded by Jayaswal and Goyal in regard to the successors of Kumāra-gupta I.

51 Jayaswal's edition of the text and his translation (*IHIJ*, 33) are followed here. The extract quoted follows immediately the account of the Guptas reproduced in the preceding footnote.

52 Jayaswal further identifies Prakāśāditya of the coins with Budha-gupta on the ground that the letter '*u*' occurs on these coins beneath the royal figure.

53 *PHAI*, 500, n. 2.

54 Sircar, *SI*, 337, n. 4.

55 *PHAI*, 500, n. 2.

tory. Although, therefore, it mentions two more kings as successors of Deva, we shall be hardly justified in regarding them as kings in the imperial line until corroborative evidence is available.

More importance attaches to two other kings whose names have been doubtfully read as Jaya-gupta and Hari-gupta on a few copper coins.[56] These do not resemble the Gupta coins, but belong to the sixth century A.D. In a Jaina account of Toramāṇa,[57] Hari-gupta, a scion of the Gupta family, is said to be the *guru* of Toramāṇa. Another disciple of this Hari-gupta was Deva-gupta who is described as a royal sage of the royal house of the Guptas. Whether this Hari-gupta is the king who issued the copper-coins, and Deva-gupta is identical with Deva-bhaṭṭāraka of the Damodarpur copper plate, and whether either of them had any relation with the Imperial Gupta family, cannot be decided in the present state of our knowledge. We must, therefore, conclude that Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya, Kumāra-gupta (III) Kramāditya, and Vishṇu-gupta Chandrāditya were the last three emperors who flourished between c. A.D. 500 and 550. With Vishṇu-gupta Chandrāditya ends the Imperial Gupta family after enjoying sovereignty for more than 230 years.

This lower limit of the Gupta Empire is supported by independent evidence. In the first place it is very significant that in the royal seals of the Maukharis, Īśāna-varman was the first king to whom the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* is given, whereas all his three predecessors are styled only *Mahārāja*. This shows that it was nöt till Īśāna-varman's time that the Maukharis finally shook off the suzerainty of the Guptas. As the only known date of Īśāna-varman is A.D. 553, his accession, or rather declaration of independence, may be dated about A.D. 550.[58]

Secondly, the Maitraka ruler Dhruvasena I of Valabhī, who ruled till at least A.D. 545, used the phrase *parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pādānudhyāta*, by way of paying at least a nominal allegiance to the Gupta Emperor. This phrase disappears in the Grant of Guhasena, whose earliest known date is A.D. 557 (or 560). The nominal allegiance must have been given up between A.D. 545 and 557.[59]

Lastly, there is an interesting land-grant,[60] dated 232 (A.D. 551-52); found at Amauna in the district of Gayā (S. Bihar), i.e. in the heart of Magadha. It was issued by one *Kumārāmātya Mahārāja* Nandana who describes himself as meditating on the feet of *deva-guru* (*deva-guru-pādānudhyāta*). Thus *deva-guru* is substituted for the name of

56 *CGD*, pp. civ-cv.

57 This will be related later in Ch. IX, Sect. III.

58 Cf. Ch. VIII, Sect. I.

59 Cf. Ch. IX, Sect. I.

60 *EI*, X, p. 50.

the suzerain king. Whether it means the king and his *guru*, as the editor of the grant suggests, or in general to 'gods and preceptors' in a general way, as seems more probable, it is certain that at the time the grant was issued no effective authority was exercised by any Gupta king in that locality. This may be due to a temporary cause such as a civil war between rival claimants to the throne when a feudal chief or district authority did not know to whom to pay allegiance. Or it may be due to the final dissolution of the Gupta Empire when no other power had securely established itself. In any case the grant seems to mark the virtual end of the authority of the Imperial Guptas in Magadha.

Thus all the three lines of evidence point out to A.D. 550 as the approximate date of the end of the Gupta Empire. Reference may be made in this connection to the Jaina tradition about the end of the Gupta rule. According to Jinasena's list of royal dynasties given in his *Harivaṁśa*, composed in 705 Śaka (A.D. 783), 'the Guptas began to rule after the lapse of seven hundred and twenty years from the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. They ruled for 231 years and were followed by Kalkirāja.'[61] On the other hand, Guṇabhadra, a disciple of Jinasena, says that Kalkirāja, a great tyrant who oppressed the world, was born 1000 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. Again Nemichandra (eighth century A.D.) reproduces in his work *Trilokasāra* some details of the story of Kalkirāja and adds that he was born in 395 Śaka, which corresponds to the 1000th year after *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. In spite of the discrepancy from Jinasena's list, this categorical statement would place Kalki's birth in A.D. 473. Guṇabhadra further says that Kalki reigned for forty years and died at the age of seventy. So Kalki's reign extends from A.D. 503 to 543. It has been suggested by Pathak that this tyrannical and oppressive Kalki is no other than Mihirakula. On the other hand, it has been urged by Jayaswal that the Kalki incarnation of Vishṇu, as described in the Purāṇas, was an historical personage, and considering his various achievements may be regarded as 'a patriotic and religious Napoleon of India who destroyed the *Mlechchha* kings and the irreligious and haters of the *dharma*', in the late fifth and early sixth centuries A.D. The same scholar has identified the Kalki with Yaśodharman. Kalki has also been identified with Toramāṇa.[62] This wide diversity of conclusions shows how little we may rely on deductions of this character. It is interest-

61 For the original Jaina texts and the different theories about Kalki, cf. K. B. Pathak in *IA*, XV, 141; *Bhandarkar Commemoration* Volume, 195 ff; and Jayaswal in *IA*, XLVI, 148 ff.

62 This is the view of K. G. Sankar (*NIA*, IV, 36) who points out that Toramāṇa flourished about 1000 years after Vīra-Nirvāṇa. According to Guṇabhadra,

ing to note, however, that Kalki, who is generally regarded in the Purāṇas as having brought the *Kali Age* to an end, is placed in the Jaina chronicles immediately after the Guptas. In other words, it seems to testify to the general belief that the fall of the Guptas marks the end of an epoch in Indian history.

According to Jinasena's account, the Guptas ruled from about A.D. 192 to 423, but this cannot be reconciled with known facts.[63] On the other hand, if we count backwards from A.D. 503, the date of Kalki's accession according to Guṇabhadra, we get the period A.D. 272 to 503 as the period of Gupta rule, which is not probably very wide of the mark, particularly if we remember that the Jaina writers generally had in view the political condition of Western India. At the same time, the total number of years assigned to the Guptas, viz 231 years, would not be far from truth if we count from the beginning of the Gupta era in A.D. 319-20. For this would place the end of the Gupta power in A.D. 550, a date which we have provisionally fixed on independent grounds.

Reference may be made to another Jaina text—*Tiloya-paṇṇatti*—a stanza of which gives the duration of the Gupta rule as 231 years, and thus supports the statement of Jinasena. But according to two other stanzas in the same text, the Śakas ruled for 242 years, and the Guptas for 255 years.[64] It is interesting to note that the above duration of the Śaka rule gives exactly the difference between the epochs of the Śaka and the Gupta eras. In other words, the author regarded the Guptas as immediately succeeding the Śakas. Whatsoever we may think of this, the discrepancy in the duration of the Gupta rule—231 and 255 years—in one and the same text, at first appears to be somewhat puzzling. But we know that the Gupta suzerainty was acknowledged in the Ganjam region in Orissa as late as the year 250 of the Gupta Era.[65] This supports the duration of the Gupta rule of about 255 years, at least in some regions. It is, therefore, just possible that the tradition of Gupta rule for 231 years refers to Magadha and

Kalki was born in Pāṭaliputra and was a son of King Śiśupāla. Mr. Sankar finds a reference to this Śiśupāla in the Prahladpur Stone Pillar Ins. (*CII*, III, 249) and thinks that he was probably a general of the Gupta king.

63 The date A.D. 192 agrees with the statement of I-tsing that 'Śrī-Gupta flourished about five hundred years ago' (see ante p. 7). It has accordingly been suggested that this Śrī-gupta was the grandfather of Gupta, the first Gupta king mentioned in the Gupta Inscriptions (*QJMS*, XXIV, 220). But we can hardly accept the existence of this king without further evidence. Besides, this view would put the end of the Gupta rule in A.D. 424 which can hardly be supported.

64 *Essays Presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar*, 346 ff.

65 Sumaṇḍala copper-plate, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVIII, 79-85.

neighbouring territories, while the other tradition of 255 years is true of some other outlying regions like Orissa.

5. RETROSPECT AND REVIEW

'All mortal power is doomed to decline, but the memory of greatness stands for ever.' These words, put in the mouth of Pericles by the great historian who witnessed the downfall of Athens, may be taken as a fit epitaph for the Gupta Empire. It rose and fell, but left a deep impress upon posterity by the standard which it set in all departments of life and culture—a standard which was alike the envy and despair of succeeding ages. Its greatness was such that even today, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years, the Gupta Age is regarded as the Golden or the Classical Age of India. In letters and science, as well as in arts and crafts, it evoked the highest intellectual expression that India was ever capable of, and the religious movements and philosophical speculations which it fostered are still the greatest living forces in Indian life. These noble achievements will be discussed in detail in a separate chapter. But it is necessary to emphasize here that at the root of all these lay the 'Imperial Peace' which was established by the efforts of a succession of able rulers.

The dynastic history of the Guptas is therefore of more than passing importance. We have traced above, as far as our very limited sources permit, the part played by the different emperors in building up the mighty edifice, and also the various forces that were at work in pulling it down. We may now pause for a moment to make a few general observations on the basis of our detailed study.

All empires in India have to face the great resistance fostered by a spirit of narrow autonomy, both regional and communal. Chandragupta Maurya in the fourth century B.C. and Samudra-gupta in the fourth century A.D. had both to fight hard against this inveterate and inherent spirit of Indian national life. But both were favoured to a large extent by the prevailing political condition in the country. The ruthless invasion of Alexander did as much as the succession of foreign rule in India in the later age to open the eyes of the Indians to the great danger of living in small separate political communities, however strongly such a thing might have appealed to their inborn sentiments. The way was thus paved for a political unity, though only to a limited extent. Samudra-gupta had to fight hard to impose the imperial unity, but his task was probably facilitated by the willing surrender of authority by many kings and tribal States. We may well believe that old republican clans like the Mālavas and the Yaudheyas would have found it very hard to give up their cherished independence. But though internal autonomy was left to them by Samudra-gupta, they

seem to have been gradually absorbed in the growing empire. At all events, they vanish for ever from the field of Indian politics. Either they were deliberately crushed, once and for all, by the ruthless policy of imperialism of which they have been natural enemies in all ages and countries; or they disappeared silently by the irresistible logic of stern facts which could no longer brook these small gaps in the solid organization of a real political life in the country. The small autonomous clans like the Lichchhavis and the Mālavas were great nurseries of freedom, and as such played a very important rôle in political and cultural life in India for more than a millennium. But their days were over and the Gupta Empire gave a death-blow to them. Whether they had outlived their utility or fell a victim to mere power politics, it is difficult to say. But they had no place in the imperialist State-policy which the Guptas left as a legacy to India.

This policy could take a deep root in the soil on account of the long duration of the Gupta Empire. It is not always realized that this empire lasted longer than most of the empires that flourished in India, perhaps not excluding even the Mughal Empire. It could thus establish an imperial tradition which lasted long after it had disappeared, and inspired a series of able dynasts, in a long and almost unbroken line of succession, to build up an empire after their model. Many of them succeeded, in varying degrees, but the fruit of their labour seldom outlived their own life or continued at best for two to three generations. A thousand years passed before we find another empire of equal strength and duration in India. But it was founded by foreign invaders of an alien culture. The imperial peace established by the Mughals was not followed by that outburst of intellectual activity and the deep stirrings of spiritual emotions which characterized the Gupta Age. Thus while the Gupta Empire set in motion forces which made themselves felt in later ages, it still remains almost a unique achievement in India.

The broad steps by which the empire was brought into being are fairly known, and have been described above. But we are not equally well informed about the causes of its downfall or even the chief stages in its decline. The general impression that the Hūṇa invasion brought about the end of the Gupta Empire can hardly be regarded as correct. The Hūṇas were completely defeated and suffered a severe set-back in the days of Skanda-gupta. If they achieved greater success half a century later, it was due perhaps as much to the internal decay of the Gupta power brought about by other causes as to their own inherent strength. But even then, in spite of their initial success, the Hūṇas were effectively checked. They had no doubt caused damages and devastations on a large scale, and dealt a great blow to the prestige

of the empire, but, except for a very short period, they did not count as an important factor in Indian politics, and the Gupta Empire successfully outlived that period. If other factors had not intervened, the Gupta Empire might have rallied even after the great shock that it had sustained at the hands of the Hūṇas.

But that was not to be. The disruptive forces within the empire were now let loose, and it proved impossible to control them. Personal ambitions, combined with the spirit of local autonomy, led to the defection of feudal chiefs and provincial governors, and the situation was probably rendered worse by quarrels and jealousies among the members of the imperial family. Perhaps even all these causes would have failed to make any headway if there were a strong personality at the helm of affairs. But it is idle to expect an uninterrupted succession of able and efficient rulers in a single dynasty for more than two centuries.

The events leading to the downfall of the Gupta Empire are not known to us, and we know only a few isolated unconnected facts whose bearing on the main question is not always easy to determine. Nevertheless, on the analogy afforded by other historical examples, it is safe to presume that the downfall was brought about, not so much by the Hūṇa invasion as by the causes just mentioned, viz internal dissensions and disruptions and the weakness of the central authority. The fatal blow to the Gupta Empire was dealt, not by Toramāṇa or Mihirakula, but by Yaśodharman and other rebellious chiefs or governors. There is a remarkable analogy between the last days of the Gupta and Mughal Empires which no historian can possibly overlook.

It is natural to suppose that the same causes were at work, and the process of decline and downfall followed the same line, in the two cases. We may go even a little further and say that the Gupta Empire fell a victim to forces, both internal and external, which have, in all ages and countries, brought about the downfall of kingdoms and empires. They seem to be laws of nature in the sphere of politics. The general course, everywhere, is nearly the same, only particulars vary in their incidence and emphasis.

The Gupta Empire came to an end in the fullness of maturity. It had served its purpose and accomplished its objects. It laid down an ideal and fixed a standard for the future. It marks the end of an epoch and the beginning of another in Indian history. Taking everything into consideration, the Gupta Empire, which ushered in the Gupta Age, may be regarded as the most important phenomenon in the political history of ancient India.

LIST OF GUPTA INSCRIPTIONS

Abbreviations: B—Buddhist Image. Br—Brahmanical Image.
C—Cave. CP—Copper-plate. J—Jaina Image.
P—Pillar. S—Stone.

(Unless otherwise stated the year refers to the Gupta Era. The object on which the inscription is engraved is mentioned after the find-place.)

SAMUDRA-GUPTA

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
1.	5	Nālandā-CP.	*EI*, XXV, 50; XXVI, 135.
2.	9	Gayā-CP.	*CII*, III, 254; *IC*, X, 77; XI, 225.
3.	—	Allahabad-P.	*CII*, III, 1; *IHQ*, I, 250; *JBORS*, XVIII, 207; *JRAS*, 1935, p. 697; *EI*, XXII, 35.
4.	—	Eran-S	*CII*, III, 18; *JIH*, XIV, 27; XIX, 27.

CHANDRA-GUPTA II

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
5.	61	Mathurā-P.	*EI*, XXI, 1; *IHQ*, XVIII, 271; *ABORI*, XVIII, 166.
6.	82	Udayagiri-C.	*CII*, III, 21.
7.	88	Gadhwa-S.	*CII*, III, 36.
8.	93	Sāñchī-S.	*CII*, III, 29.
9.	—	Mathurā-S.	*CII*, III, 25.
10.	—	Udayagiri-C.	*CII*, III, 34.
11.	—	Basarh Clay Seals (Govinda-gupta)	*ASI*, 1903-4, p. 107.

KUMĀRA-GUPTA I

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
12.	96	Bilsad-P.	*CII*, III, 42.
13.	98	Gadhwa-S.	*CII*, III, 40; cf. also pp. 264, 267.
14.	106	Udayagiri-C.	*CII*, III. 258.
15.	113	Dhanaidaha-CP.	*EI*, XVIII, 347.
16.	113	Mathurā-J.	*EI*, II, 210.
17.	116	Tumain-S.	*EI*, XXVI, 115.
18.	117	Karamdanda-Br.	*EI*, X, 71.
19.	120	Kulaikuri-CP.	*IHQ*, XIX, 12.
20.	124	Damodarpur-CP.	*EI*, XV, 129.
21.	128	Damodarpur-CP.	*EI*, XV, 132; XVII, 193.
22.	128	Baigram-CP.	*EI*, XXI, 78.
23.	129	Mankuwar-B.	*CII*, III, 45.
24.	—	Gadhwa-S.	*CII*, III, 39.
25.	—	Basarh Clay Seals (Ghaṭotkacha-gupta)	*ASI*, 1903-4, p. 107.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Name of the King*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		SKANDA-GUPTA		
26.	136-8	—	Junagadh Rock.	*CII*, III, 56.
27.	141	—	Kahaum-P.	*CII*, III, 65.
28.	141	—	Supia (Rewa-P).	*EI*, XXXIII, 306.
29.	146	—	Indore-CP.	*CII*, III, 68.
30.	—	—	Bhitari-P.	*CII*, III, 52.
		GOVINDA-GUPTA AND PRABHAKARA		
31.	V.S. 524 (A.D. 467)	—	Mandasor Fort Wall.	*ASI*, 1922-3, p. 187.
		NARASIṀHA-GUPTA		
32.	—	—	Nālandā Clay Seal.	*MASI*, No. 66, p. 65.
		KUMĀRA-GUPTA II (OR III)		
33.	154	—	Sārnāth-B.	*ASI*, 1914-15, p. 124.
34.	—	—	Bhitari Seal.	*JASB*, LVIII, 89.
35.	—	—	Nālandā Seal.	*MASI*, No. 66, pp. 66-7; *IA*. XIX 225.
		BUDHA-GUPTA		
36.	157	—	Sārnāth-B (Duplicate).	*ASI*, 1914-15, p. 125
37.	159	—	Pāhārpur-CP.	*EI*, XX, 61.
38.	163	—	Damodarpur-CP.	*EI*, XV, 134.
39.	165	—	Eran-P.	*CII*, III, 88.
40.	—	—	Damodarpur-CP.	*EI*, XV, 138; *IC*, V, 432.
41.	—	—	Nālandā Seal.	*MASI*, No. 66, p. 64; *IHQ*, XIX, 119, 272.
41A.	—	—	Benares (Rājghāt).	*JRASBL*, XV, 5.
		OTHER GUPTA KINGS		
42.	—	(Successor of Pūru-gupta)	Bihar-P.	*CII*, III, 47; *JBORS*, XIX, 377. *IC*, X, 170.
43.	169	—	Nandanpur-CP.	*EI*, XXIII, 52.
44.	—	Vishṇu-gupta	Nālandā Seal.	*EI*, XXVI, 235; *IHQ*, XIX, 119
45.	188	Vainya-gupta	Gunaighar-CP.	*IHQ*, VI, 40.
46.	—	Vainya-gupta	Nālandā Seal.	*MASI*, No. 66, p. 67; *IHQ*, XIX, 275.
47.	191	Bhānu-gupta	Eran-P.	*CII*, III, 91; *EI*, XXII, 16; *IHQ*, XIX, 143.
48.	224	—	Damodarpur-CP.	*EI*, XV, 142; XVII, 193, n. 1

INSCRIPTIONS OF CONTEMPORARY RULERS AND DYNASTIES

Serial No.	*Year*	*Name of the King*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
49.	461 (V.S.)	Nara-varman	Mandasor-S.	*EI*, XII, 315; XIV, 371.
50.	474 (V.S.)	Nara-varman	Bihar Kotra-S.	*EI*, XXVI, 130; *JBORS*, XXIX, 127.
51.	480 (V.S.)	Viśva-varman	Gangdhar-S.	*CII*, III, 72.
52.	493 and 529 (V.S.)	Bandhu-varman	Mandasor-S.	*CII*, III, 79; *IC*, III, 379; IV, 110, 262, 361; VI, 110, 339. *S. K. Aiyangar Com. Vol.*, p. 69.
53.	156	Hastin	Khoh-CP.	*CII*, III, 93.
54.	163	Hastin	Khoh-CP.	*CII*, III, 100.
55.	191	Hastin	Mājhgāwān-CP.	*CII*, III, 106.
56.	198	Hastin	Navagrām-CP.	*EI*. XXI, 124.
57.	199	Saṁkshobha	Betul-CP.	*EI*, VIII, 284.
58.	209	Saṁkshobha	Khoh-CP.	*CII*, III, 112.
59.	—	Hastin and Śarvanātha	Bhumara-CP.	*CII*, III, 110; *IHQ*, XXI, 137.
60.	174	Jayanātha	Karitalai-CP.	*CII*, III, 117.
61.	177	Jayanātha	Khoh-CP.	*CII*, III, 121.
62.	191	Śarvanātha	Sohaval-CP.	*EI*, XIX, 129.
63.	193	Do.	Khoh-CP.	*CII*, III, 125.
64.	197	Do.	Do.	*CII*, III, 132.
65.	214	Do.	Do.	*CII*, III, 135.
66.	—	Do.	Do.	*CII*, III, 129.

(For the era used in Nos. 60-65, cf. EI. XXIII, 171; Bh. List, p. 159 n.)

67.	—	Chandra	Meharauli-Iron-P.	*CII*, III, 139.
68.	1 (Regnal)	Toramāṇa	Eran-S.	*CII*, III, 159.
69.	15 (Regnal)	Mihirakula	Gwalior-S.	*CII*, III, 162.
70.	—	Yaśodharman	Mandasor-P.	*CII*, III, 142, 150.
71.	589 (V.S.)	Yaśodharman	Mandasor-S.	*IA*, XVIII, 219; XX, 188.

CHAPTER SIX

THE KUSHĀṆAS, THE ŚAKAS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY STATES IN NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE GUPTA RULE

I. THE SUCCESSORS OF THE GREAT KUSHĀṆAS

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE fourth century A.D., with which this volume opens, the Sassanian rule was fully established in Sindh and Śakastān, as well as in Bactria. Afghanistan, including the Kabul valley, was under the rule of Kushāṇa chiefs who were Sassanian feudatories. The Western and the Central Panjab were being ruled by a number of chiefs who, in the absence of any definite information about their nationality, may be conveniently described as 'Scythians'. Their coins are a close imitation of the Kushāṇa prototype, but whether they were themselves Kushāṇas or not we do not know.

In the present state of our knowledge it is extremely difficult to give even an outline of the history of these 'Scythian' rulers. We have to rely almost exclusively on the evidence of coins, and it is both scanty and inconclusive. As these coins are close imitations of those of Vāsudeva II, the rulers must have come into power at about A.D. 250. One of the last rulers of the series inscribed the name of Samudra-gupta, probably his overlord, upon his coins.[1] We may, therefore, assume that these 'Scythian' rulers, who may or may not have been Kushāṇas, were holding sway in parts of the Panjab during the period *c.* A.D. 250 to 350.

The coins of these rulers are found neither in Afghanistan nor in the south-eastern Panjab. It is thus clear that they were holding sway in the Western and Central Panjab only. One series of coins of this period has the word Shāka (not Śaka) invariably written perpendicularly on the obverse to the right of the spear held by the king in his left hand. Cunningham thought[2] that this term Shāka was an abbreviation of Śākala, and concluded that the coins were issued by the kings of a Scythian dynasty ruling at Śākala or modern Sialkot.

1 Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*, Pl. II, 11.
2 *Ibid.*, 122.

But it is difficult to accept this view, for a large hoard of the 'Shāka' coins was found at Peshawar in 1905, and no ancient Indian coin series is known to have been named after the city of its issue for several generations. Cunningham's theory that the coins bearing the legend Gaḍahara were the issues of the city of Nagarahāra, situated near modern Jālālābād, is still less plausible, for the legend on these coins reads not as Nagarahāra but as Gaḍahara, as admitted by Cunningham himself.[3] The coins attributed by the same scholar to Pakaṇḍhi, a district to the north of Rawalpindi, clearly do not have the legend; the inscription concerned reads not Pakhanda but Shā(or Shī)lada.[4]

It is not, therefore, possible to accept the view of Cunningham that the three series of coins we are discussing were issued from the districts of Śākala, Nagarāhāra and Pakaṇḍhi. It is more likely that the terms concerned denote the names of the tribes of the rulers who issued these coins, the individual names appearing under the arm of each king.

We may, therefore, tentatively assume that there were three 'Scythian' houses ruling in the Central and Western Panjab during c. A.D. 250 to 350 which, for the sake of convenience, may be called Shāka, Gaḍahara, and Shālada or Shīlada. Whether these families succeeded one another, or whether they were ruling contemporaneously, we do not know. When empires disintegrate, a number of small satrapies spring into existence. It is, therefore, not unlikely that these houses were to some extent contemporaneous with one another.

On the coins of the Shāka dynasty, letters appear under the arm of the king, to the left of his right foot and to the right of his left hand. The legend in the last mentioned place is invariably Shāka and most probably denotes, as observed already, the name of the dynasty. The legend under the arm almost certainly gives the name of the king and that to the left of the right foot is either the initial of the name of the governor or of the mint city.

If these assumptions are correct, it appears that about six or seven kings ruled in the Shāka dynasty during c. A.D. 250 to 350. Unfortunately, the full names of only a few of them are known. One of them is Sita;[5] his coins are found in large numbers and he probably ruled for a long time. Another was Savatha, and a third was Lava... or Lavu.[6] The name of another ruler began with Bhṛi... The coins of

3 *Ibid.*, 124.

4 *Ibid.*, pl. II, 12-13; Smith also reads the legend as Shala (*CCIM*, Vol. I, Pl. XIV, 8).

5 Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*, Pl. II, No. 2.

6 *Ibid.*, Pl. II, 6. Cunningham has wrongly read this name in Saya.

two or three more rulers are known, but the names of their issuers are too indistinct to be deciphered. Peshawar was most probably the capital of this dynasty. What precisely was the extent of this kingdom we do not know; probably it was not more extensive than the North-Western Frontier Province.

The coins of the Shāladas[7] are much fewer. Only three rulers of the dynasty are known, viz Pāsaka, Bhadra and Bacharṇa.[8] The coins of others may have been lost, or alternatively the dynasty may have been shortlived. It is probable that the principality of this house was to the east of N.W.F.P. and may have included a portion of the Jhelum valley.

Kirada and Peraya are the two kings of the Gaḍahara house known to us from its coinage. On another Gaḍahara coin the name Samudra(gupta) appears under the king's arms.[9] It is likely that the petty principality of this house was to the east of the Jhelum, possibly in the Ravi valley. Being the easternmost Scythian family, it came earliest under the Gupta sphere of influence, and its last ruler was probably compelled to put the name of the great Gupta conqueror upon his coinage.

II. THE KIDĀRA KUSHĀṆAS

While the 'Scythian' houses of the Central and Western Panjab were dragging a precarious existence by the middle of the fourth century, a new leader arose among the Kushāṇas in Bactria. His name, Kidāra, supplied a designation to the branch of the Kushāṇas to which he belonged, and was destined to remain on coins issued several centuries after the disappearance of the Kidāra Kushāṇas. Kidāra found that there was a fresh danger to his clan from a rising tribe, called Juan-Juan, and decided at *c* A.D. 340[10] to migrate southwards and carve out a kingdom there.

At the beginning of his career, he naturally professed allegiance to the Sassanian emperor, as was done by his predecessors in Bactria. This is shown by his following the Sassanian numismatic convention of issuing coins with the bust facing right, which all feudatories were

7 It has been already pointed out above that Cunningham's reading Pakaṇḍhi is wrong.

8 Cunningham, *op. cit.*, Pl. II, 12-13. *CCIM*, I, 88-9, Pl. XIV, 4; 8. The last name was read by Cunningham as Bāshan.

9 Cunningham, *op. cit.*, Pl. II, 11.

10 Cunningham had placed Kidāra in the second quarter of the 5th century (*op. cit.*, 184); but Col. Martin has adduced sufficient evidence to show that his time was about 75 years earlier and dates his invasion of India at *c.* A.D. 348-50, *Num. Suppl.* No. XLVII, 25 ff.

required to follow.[11] Kidāra, however, was an ambitious adventurer; he gradually began extending his power towards India. The *Wei-shu* or the *Annals of the Wei Dynasty* vaguely tells us that Kidāra crossed to the south of the Great Mountains and invaded Northern India, where five kingdoms to the north of Kantholo (Gandhāra) submitted to him. We are further told by another Chinese historian, Ma-tuan-lin, that the capital of Kidāra was the city of Fu-lou-cha (Peshawar), and that he left it under the charge of his son when he had to march westwards to meet the attacks of Juan-Juan.[12]

We may conclude from the above evidence that the Scythian principalities of the Shākas, Gaḍaharas, and Shāladas which existed in the N.W.F.P. and Western and Central Panjab were annexed by Kidāra. The Chinese authorities refer to his invasion of 'northern India'. But we need not suppose that it penetrated further than the Ravi. The coins of Kidāra are not found to the east of that river, and we know that the Madras, the Yaudheyas, the Ārjunāyanas and the Nāgas were holding their own in the south-eastern Panjab and the northern U.P. by the middle of the fourth century A.D. It, however, appears certain that Kidāra penetrated into the Jhelum valley and annexed Kashmir; the letters *Ki, Kida* or *Kidāra* appear almost regularly on the Kashmir currency down to the seventh or eighth century A.D.

When Kidāra succeeded in establishing his rule firmly in Afghanistan, North Western Frontier Province, Kashmir and the Western Panjab, he naturally did not like to continue his allegiance to the Sassanian emperor. He soon repudiated it and signalised the event by issuing coins with his bust facing front.[13] He also assumed the Kushāṇa imperial title *Daivaputra-Shāhi-Shāhānushāhi*.

The Sassanian emperor Shapur II was not disposed to ignore this challenge to his supremacy by an erstwhile feudatory of his, and soon moved eastwards at the head of a strong force. Ammianus Marcellinus, an officer in the Roman army, who fought against Shapur II in Mesopotamia, tells us that this monarch was engaged in wars against the Chionitae and Euseni living on his eastern frontiers during *c.* A.D. 350-58. The name Euseni is usually regarded as a textual corruption for Cuseni or Kushāṇas. An inscription discovered at Persepolis by Dr. Herzfeld attests to the anxiety of Slok, High Judge at Kabul, that Shapur should return to Kabul in safety. Kabul seems to have been a good base of military operations against Gandhāra and the territory contiguous to it. It is, therefore, most natural to assume

11 Herzfeld, *Kussano-Sassanian Coinage*, 3-5; Martin, *op. cit.*, 29.
12 *Num. Suppl.*, XLVII, 24-25.
13 *Ibid.*, Pl. I.

that operations against the Euseni were really the operations against the Kushāṇas and their new chief Kidāra, who had recently asserted independence. Shapur was successful in the expedition, and Kidāra was compelled to acknowledge the Sassanian sovereignty. A number of gold coins showing his face profile to right have been found, and they prove his subordination to Shapur II.

It appears that Kidāra sent his own contingent to help his liege-lord in his campaign in Mesopotamia; for Roman sources refer to the participation of the Cuseni, i.e. the Kushāṇas in the siege of the Roman fortress of Amida in A.D. 359.

Kidāra, however, was an ambitious ruler and was only biding his time. By *c.* A.D. 367 he made all the necessary preparations and rebelled once more against Shapur II. This time he was able to avenge the earlier defeats; on one battlefield he annihilated the opposing Sessanian force and on another he compelled Shapur himself to fly away to save his life.[14]

It seems that *Daivaputra-Shāhi-Shāhānushāhi,* who is mentioned as offering submission to Samudra-gupta in the Allahabad inscription, is none other than Kidāra himself.[15] It is very likely that while he was making his preparations against Shapur II, he thought it prudent to secure his eastern frontiers by keeping the Gupta emperor in good humour, by sending him formal presents which were interpreted as tokens of submission by the courtiers of Samudra-gupta.

The numismatic evidence suggests that Kidāra was succeeded by Piro, who was probably his son. Piro did not only maintain his independent status for some years, but tried to expand his kingdom eastwards. This brought him into conflict with the Guptas, and very probably the 'Śaka' chief who was in a position to inflict a humiliating defeat on Rāma-gupta was Piro himself.[16] The power and pomp of Piro did not, however, last long. Shapur III soon succeeded in avenging the discomfiture of his namesake and predecessor, and completely broke Piro's power. The latter was compelled to acknowledge Sassanian suzerainty and issue coins with his bust facing right, like other feudatories of the Sassanian empire. Chandra-gupta II also took active steps to retrieve the glory of his house, darkened temporarily by the cowardice of his predecessor. He defeated the armies of the Kidāra Kushāṇas and seems to have chased them right up to the Indus.[17] Whether Chandra-gupta's campaign against Piro was before

14 *Ibid.*, 32.

15 For other views on this cf. Ch. III.

16 For the Rāma-gupta episode cf. Ch. IV.

17 This is on the very probable assumption that Chandra of the Meharaulī pillar inscription is Chandra-gupta II. Some scholars however do not accept this hypothesis (cf. Ch. IV).

or after the latter's defeat at the hands of Shapur III, we do not definitely know. If it took place in *c.* A.D. 390, which seems very probable, it would appear to have been started after Piro's overthrow by Shapur III (*c.* A.D. 383-88).

Chandra-gupta II, however, did not press his victories home, and occupy and garrison the Khyber pass. We have very little evidence of the Gupta influence in the Panjab during *c.* A.D. 375-425 apart from that supplied by the Shorkot inscription, which seems to have been dated in the year 83 of the Gupta Era (A.D. 402). Nor can we suggest that the province was under the Sassanian rule, for the coins of the Sassanian emperors or their feudatories are not found in the Panjab in any appreciable number.

It appears that Piro even after his defeat continued to rule, though over a very much attenuated kingdom. He seems to have been succeeded by Vahram, who continued to profess allegiance to the Sassanians.

The empire of the Kidāra-Kushāṇas, which at one time seems to have stretched from the Hindukush to Lahore and included Kashmir as well, was thus a shortlived one; it hardly flourished for more than 25 years. When it declined after the overthrow of Piro, the usual phenomenon occurred, and several Satraps became independent and carved out small principalities for themselves. A number of coins have been found having the name of Kidāra on the obverse, but giving the names of a number of chiefs like Kṛitavīrya, Śilāditya, Kuśala and Prakāśa on the reverse. It is very unlikely that Kidāra would have allowed his feudatories to issue coins when his power was at its height. Most probably Kṛitavīrya, Śilāditva, Kuśala, and Prakāśa were local chiefs who carved out independent principalities after the break-up of the shortlived Kidāra-Kushāṇa empire. They continued to pay a kind of nominal allegiance to the defunct Kidāra-Kushāṇa power by putting the name of its founder on the obverse of their coins. But they took care to put their own names also on the reverse, evidently to show that they were something more than mere feudatories. The names of these chiefs are all Sanskritic; they were, therefore, either Hindu governors under the Kidāra-Kushāṇas, who later on became independent; or they were Kushāṇa or Scythian chiefs who had been completely Hinduised and adopted Hindu names.

These petty rulers must have professed allegiance sometimes to the descendants of Kidāra, sometimes to the Sassanians, and sometimes to the Guptas, as the exigency of the times may have demanded. They seem to have ruled from *c.* A.D. 390 to 440; they were swept away by the Hūṇa avalanche some time in the fourth decade of the fifth century.

III. THE WESTERN KSHATRAPAS (SATRAPS)

We have shown above how the power of the Kushāṇa and Scythian rulers of the Panjab was on the decline during the fourth century and how their houses eventually disappeared by the beginning of the next century. Exactly the same phenomenon is seen in connection with the fortunes of the Śaka Kshatrapas of Western India. They were reduced to a feudatory status during the first half of the fourth century. There was a temporary revival of their power under Rudrasena III during the third quarter of the century, just as there was a revival of the Kushāṇa power at the time under Kidāra. The revival, however, was shortlived in either case; the Śaka power was completely extinguished by the beginning of the fifth century; we have seen already how a similar fate overtook the Kidāra-Kushāṇas at about the same time.

Like the history of the Kushāṇas during the fourth century, that of the contemporary Western Kshatrapas also is shrouded in great mystery, and our reconstruction of their history can, therefore, be only tentative. As noted above,[18] the ruling house of Chashṭana suddenly comes to an end in A.D. 304, with the reign of Bhartṛidāman. His son Viśvasena did not succeed him, and the crown passed on to Rudrasiṁha II. The accession of Rudrasiṁha II did not probably take place peacefully, and there was a sharp but short conflict between him and Viśvasena which rendered life and property unsafe at the capital.[19] Rudrasiṁha II was, however, successful in the struggle and began to rule in A.D. 304, which is also the last known date of Viśvasena.

The coin legend of Rudrasiṁha II shows that his father's name was Jīvadāman. No coins of Jīvadāman have been found, and his simple title *svāmi* would suggest that he did not belong to any royal family and was not even a feudatory chief in status. We have no clue to determine the relationship, if any, between Jīvadāman and Bhartṛidāman. The names Jīvadāman, Rudrasiṁha and Yaśodāman, which are borne by the members of the new house, show that they were most probably collateral members of the Kshatrapa family. It is not improbable that Jīvadāman was a younger brother of Bhartṛidāman, and that his son succeeded in ousting his cousin Viśvasena soon after the death of the latter's father. The view held that Jīvadāman, father of Rudrasiṁha II, was a local Śaka chief

18 Cf. Vol. II, 290-91.

19 A hoard of 520 coins was found at Junāgaḍh, where the last king represented is Bhartṛidāman, (*Num. Suppl.*, XLVII, 97). It may be presumed that insecurity was the cause of this hoarding. Since both Viśvasena and Rudrasiṁha issued coins in the year A.D. 304 it is legitimate to infer that the conflict was a shortlived one.

ruling at Sāñchi in the last quarter of the third century A.D.[20] is no longer tenable; it has been now shown that the Sāñchi inscription, on which it was based, does not at all mention any Śaka chieftain named Jīvadāman.[21]

Throughout their reigns (*c.* A.D. 304-32), both Rudrasiṁha II and his son Yaśodāman II remained content with the humbler title of *Kshatrapa*. Not on a single coin of theirs do we come across the higher title of *Mahākshatrapa*, which at this time denoted an independent status. The abeyance of the title of *Mahākshatrapa* is a significant circumstance, for all the members of the house of Chashṭana, from the time of Rudradāman I onwards, invariably adopted it when they became full-fledged kings. It is almost certain that political subordination was the real cause for Rudrasiṁha and his son Yaśodāman remaining content with the humbler title of *Kshatrapa*, which at this time denoted a feudatory status.

It is, however, not yet possible to identify with certainty the political power which reduced the Western Kshatrapas to a subordinate position. We have already seen how by *c.* A.D. 290 Seistan and Sindh had been brought under Sassanian suzerainty. It is, therefore, possible, that there may have been a fresh extension of Sassanian conquests in the first decade of the fourth century, as a consequence of which Rudrasiṁha II and Yaśodāman II found it necessary to submit to the Sassanian overlordship and remain content with the feudal title of *Kshatrapa*.[22]

Herzfeld and others, who support this view, mainly rely on the evidence of the Paikuli inscription. This fragmentary record narrates how in the internecine war between Narseh (A.D. 293-302) and his grand-nephew Vahram (Varhran) III, a number of Indian chiefs took the side of the former, among whom were the lord of Avanti and the king of the Ābhīras. And since these are described as the feudatories of the successful rival to the Sassanian throne, it is argued that the Sassanian suzerainty had extended over the dominions of the Ābhīras and the Śakas, i.e., Kāthiāwār, Gujarāt and Mālwā.

There is, however, no force in these arguments. The Paikuli inscription is a kind of grandiloquent description of the accession of Narseh after the successful war of succession, and we need not take its statements at their face value. The Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra-gupta, for instance, describes how the Kushāṇa rulers of the north-western Panjab and kings of Ceylon and all other islands came to offer submission to Samudra-gupta and beg the favour of copper charters,

20 R. D. Banerji in *EI*, XVI, 230.
21 N. C. Majumdar in *JASB*, XIX, 341-66.
22 Raychaudhuri, *PHAI* (4th Ed.), 428.

re-granting them their territories. But, as noted above (p. 29), these statements are highly exaggerated, and in some cases at least the formal presents offered to Samudra-gupta by these rulers were taken by his court-poet as sufficient evidence of their having accepted his suzerain position. The same may have been the mentality of the author of the Paikuli inscription when he described the king of Avanti and the chief of the Ābhīras as the feudatories of Narseh. Further, it has to be pointed out that the king of Avanti of the Paikuli inscription need not necessarily be identified with the contemporary *Mahākshatrapa* ruler, Bhartṛidāman. He may have been some junior prince of the Śaka family who, finding no prospect of ascending the throne, may have entered the service of Narseh as a mercenary with the hope of carving out a kingdom in Sindh or Baluchistan. Being a scion of the Śaka family of Avanti, he may have been popularly known as the lord of Avanti, and could therefore have been so described in the Paikuli inscription. We need not suppose that he was actually ruling over Avanti. Attention may in this connection be drawn to the custom of the inscriptions of the Yādavas of Devagiri and the Hoysalas of Dvārasamudra describing these kings as *Dvāravatīpuravarādhīśvaras,* 'lords of the city of Dvārakā', although they never held any sway over Dvārakā. The same may have been the case with the lord of Avanti of the Paikuli inscription. He may have been a prince originally hailing from Avanti, but not ruling over that city in A.D. 293.

There is ample evidence to show that Bhartṛidāman, who was the real lord of Avanti between A.D. 285 and 304, had never been reduced to a feudatory status. On his numerous coins issued during this period, he is invariably given the imperial title *Mahākshatrapa,* and never the feudatory title *Kshatrapa.* It is not he, but his successors who content themselves with the feudatory title *Kshatrapa* from A.D. 304 onwards. Had the change in title taken place from A.D. 290, the evidence of the Paikuli record suggesting Sassanian overlordship would have been almost irresistible. But the change in title takes place 14 years later. During this interval the Sassanian power was ebbing. Narseh suffered a signal defeat at the hands of the Roman Emperor Galerius and had to cede extensive territories to the conqueror in order to recover his family fallen into the enemy's hands. He was not in a position to reduce Bhartridāman to a feudatory position and there is no evidence of his ever having done so. Narseh's successor had a short reign of 7 years (A.D. 302-9) and is not known to have undertaken any expedition to the east. The next ruler, Shapur II, was an infant in arms in A.D. 310. The discomfiture of the Western Kshatrapas in A.D. 304 cannot therefore be attributed to an eastward expansion of the Sassanian power. No Sassanian coins have been found in Kāthiāwār,

Gujarāt and Mālwā; nor do the contemporary Śaka coins show any Sassanian influence, like the coins of the later Kushāṇa rulers known as Scytho-Sassanians.

The Vākāṭakas were the immediate neighbours of the Western Kshatrapas, and their king Pravarasena I, who ruled from *c.* A.D. 275 to 335, was the only ruler of the dynasty who had taken the imperial title *samrāṭ*. He is also known to have performed as many as four horse-sacrifices. It is, therefore, not unlikely that Pravarasena tried to extend his sphere of influence by supporting the rebellion of Rudrasiṁha II on condition that he would become his feudatory and remain content with the humbler title of *Kshatrapa*. To support the claim of an upstart against the legitimate ruler is one of the most common methods of imperialism in all ages in order to extend its sphere of influence.

It must, however, be stated that there is no definite and direct evidence to show that Rudrasiṁha II and his son Yaśodāman had become feudatories of the Vākāṭakas and were on that account compelled to remain content with the inferior title of *Kshatrapa*. It is a mere suggestion, and the only proof that can be adduced in its support is the assumption of the imperial title by Pravarasena. The subordination of Rudrasiṁha II and Yaśodāman II is, however, a mere hypothesis, which requires much stronger grounds for its support before it can be accepted. No other hypothesis can, however, be advanced at present.

The years A.D. 332-48 are a dark period in the Kshatrapa history. We get no coins whatsoever during this period, which constitutes the longest gap in the *Kshatrapa* coinage. It appears that the *Kshatrapa* power was totally eclipsed for a part of this period, but who the enemy was who overwhelmed it, we do not know. It cannot be the Vākāṭakas, for a struggle for the imperial throne was going on in that kingdom at this time. It cannot be the Guptas, for they were yet a local power in Bihar and eastern U.P.[23] It cannot be the Sassanians, for they were engaged in Roman wars during 337-38.

When the curtain rises over the Śaka history in A.D. 348, we find Rudrasena III as a *Mahākshatrapa*. According to his coin legend he was the son of Mahākshatrapa Rudradāman II. It is, therefore, clear that Rudradāman II ruled as a *Mahākshatrapa* during part of the dark period of 16 years, A.D. 332-48, though no coin of his has been found so far. Rudradāman's relationship with Yaśodāman II is not known. He may have been a younger brother or a collateral of Yāśodāman II, who

23 *Num. Suppl.*, XLVII, 95. But if we assume that Samudra-gupta ascended the throne in A.D. 320 as suggested above (p. 16) we can attribute the decline of the Western Satraps to the growing power of the Guptas. See also *ante* Vol. II, 291.

rebelled against him soon after A.D. 332. There was probably a prolonged civil war, and neither of the rival claimants to the throne found it possible to issue coins during the troubled period. This appears to be the most reasonable explanation for the cessation of the Kshatrapa coinage during the period A.D. 332-48.[24] This, again, it must be added, is a mere theory, which needs stronger evidence in order to become generally acceptable.

Rudrasena III, who succeeded his father Rudradāman II in or before A.D. 348, had a fairly long reign of thirty years (A.D. 348-90). It was, however, not a peaceful one. For about eight years,[24a] from A.D. 352 to 359, his power seems to have been completely eclipsed, for no coins issued by him during this period are known. On the other hand, we get two hoards buried, one in his capital Junāgaḍh and the other at Sarvania in one of the easternmost districts of his kingdom, where we find that only those coins of this ruler are represented which were issued during A.D. 348-51; and they are found to be in a mint condition. It seems that there was a widespread political disturbance which affected practically the whole of the Kshatrapa kingdom and induced people to bury their treasures when they fled away for safety.

The causes of this political upheaval also are not yet known. The Sassanian Emperor Shapur II was encamped at Kabul in A.D. 356, probably engaged in fight against Kidāra, the Kushāṇa chief. It is not unlikely that he sent another expedition further south to Kāthiāwār from his advanced bases in Sindh, which may have temporarily eclipsed the *Kshatrapa* power. It is argued that a Persian principality may have been established in Kāthiāwār as a result of this expedition, and that Raghu's land expedition from northern Konkan to the Pāraśīka kingdom, described by Kālidāsa,[25] was not an invasion of distant Persia but an attack on this Persian principality in Kāthiāwār via northern Gujarāt.[26] There is, however, no direct evidence to support this theory of Sassanian invasion. No Sassanian or Indian inscriptions refer to it. We do not find any Sassanian coins in the Kshatrapa dominions, nor is the Kshatrapa coinage influenced in the least by the Sassanian prototype.

The Vākāṭakas were too weak at this time to inflict any defeat on Rudrasena III; and Samudra-gupta was still too distant. The territories directly governed by this Gupta emperor did not extend much

24 It has been suggested, with a great degree of plausibility, that Mahākshatrapa Iśvaradatta ruled during 332-48, and this sufficiently explains the cessation of the Kshatrapa coins (*JBBRAS*, XXX, 52; *IHQ*, XXXIV, 258). [Ed.]

24a Cf. *HCIP*, III, 48, n. 1.

25 *Raghuvaṁśa*, IV, 60.

26 Hodiwala in *JBBRAS*, VI, 1930, pp. 278-85.

to the west of the district of Saugar in M.P. It is, however, not impossible that he carried a raid into the *Kshatrapa* dominions with the help and co-operation of his western feudatories, the Kākas, the Sanakānīkas, etc. This raid may even have resulted in a temporary subordination of the Kshatrapas; but it need not have stopped their coinage. The Gaḍaharas were the feudatories of Samudra-gupta, but they continued their coinage, only occasionally engraving the name of the Gupta Emperor on it. In spite of his subordination to Samudra-gupta, for which there is yet no definite evidence, Rudrasena could have continued his coinage. On the whole it does not seem very likely that Gupta imperialism was the cause of the *Kshatrapa* debacle during A.D. 352-59.[27]

The present writer has suggested that the rise of Śarva Bhaṭṭāraka, who started the so-called Valabhī coinage, may have been the cause of the temporary eclipse of the power of Rudrasena III.[28] There is no doubt that Śarva ruled some time between *c.* A.D. 350-400, and that he held sway over Gujarāt and Kāthiāwār where alone his coins are found in large numbers. It is precisely in these provinces that the coinage of Rudrasena III stops suddenly during part of this period, i.e. A.D. 352-59. It is, therefore, very likely that the rise of Śarva Bhaṭṭāraka may have been the cause of the *Kshatrapa* debacle resulting in the complete stoppage of their coinage for eight years. This theory also, it must be added, has not yet quite convincing evidence to stand upon.

Whatever may be the real cause of his temporary overthrow, there is no doubt that Rudrasena succeeded in retrieving the fortunes of his family by 360. We find him ruling his kingdom with the higher title of *Mahākshatrapa* from 360 to 390.

But troubles broke out again towards the close of his reign. This is evident from the fact that his sister's son Svāmī Siṁhasena issued coins with the title of *Mahākshatrapa* in A.D. 382 and probably also in 384. It is clear therefore that there was a rival claimant to the throne who succeeded in occupying the whole or a part of the kingdom at least for some years. Rudrasena IV, son of Svāmī Siṁhasena, also occupied the throne of his father for some time, and we have got a single coin issued by him without any date. The matter is further complicated by the fact that there was another *Mahākshatrapa*, Svāmī Rudrasiṁha III who issued coins with a date of which the first two

27 But this is the most satisfactory explanation in the present state of our knowledge. The discovery of an inscription of an Ābhīra king named Īśvaradeva (*Ind. Arch.*, 1967-68, p. 52), dated Śaka 254, suggests the rise of the Ābhīras as a possible cause of the debacle of the power of the Western Satraps between 360 and 390 A.D. (Editor).
28 *JNSI*, VI, 19-23.

figures, 3 and 1, alone can be read, but the unit figure is lost. He must have therefore ruled some time between 310 and 319 Śaka, i.e., A.D. 388 and 397. Again, this Rudrasiṁha III is described on his coins as the son of Mahākshatrapa Svāmī Satyasiṁha. Though no coins of the latter are known he must have ruled or at least pretended to do so for a short time.

Thus after a brief respite between A.D. 360 and 380 the Śaka kingdom was again convulsed by troubles. These might have been the effect of the Gupta Emperor's policy towards the kingdom. In any case these troubles, whether deliberately engineered by the Gupta Emperor or not, eminently served his purpose of destroying the kingdom of the Western Kshatrapas. It is very likely that the final encounter took place between Chandra-gupta II and Rudrasiṁha III, and it is round this that the legends about Rāma-gupta and Chandra-gupta II and their Śaka adversary grew up in course of time.[29]

IV. INDIAN STATES IN NORTHERN INDIA

How the decline of the Śaka and the Kushāṇa powers during the third century A.D. was partly due to the re-assertion of their independence by a number of Indian republics and kingdoms like those of the Yaudheyas, the Ārjunāyanas, the Mālavas, the Nāgas, etc. has already been narrated in the preceding volume. Not much is, however, known about the history and achievements of most of these States during the fourth century, and so we can add only a few words to the account of these States already given in the last volume.

1. *The Madras, the Kuṇindas, the Yaudheyas and the Mālavas*

These republics continued to flourish during the fourth century A.D. and were probably occupying the same territory as they did in the preceding century. Of these the Madras, who have left us no coinage, seem to have occupied the region between Lahore and Sialkot. The Kuṇindas were occupying the Kangra valley. Their coinage of the fourth century is not known, and Samudra-gupta's Allahabad inscrip-

29 The author of this chapter accepted the dates of the known coins of Rudrasena III on the authority of Rapson (*BMCAWK*), but later discoveries (after the chapter was written) have proved that some of Rapson's views, accepted by the author, are wrong. Thus, according to Rapson,

(i) there were no silver coins of Rudrasena III later than 273 (Śaka era) and earlier than 286; and

(ii) the latest known coin of Rudrasena III is dated 300.

But silver coins of Rudrasena III dated 282, 284 and 312 have since been discovered (cf. *HCIP*, Vol. III, 48-49). The text of this chapter, which could not be revised by the late lamented author, has been amended accordingly, and the consequential changes have been made by the Editor, who alone is responsible for the last two paras substituted for the two original ones.

tion does not mention them. It is, therefore, not unlikely that they had amalgamated with the Yaudheyas in a federation. The Ārjunāyanas, who were occupying the Agra-Jaipur area, are mentioned in the Allahabad inscription, but their post-Kushāṇa coinage is not known. It is not unlikely that they also formed a kind of loose confederation with the Yaudheyas. The find-spots of the coin-hoards show that the Yaudheyas had under their sway a fairly extensive tract of territory stretching from Ludhiana to Sahāranpur in one direction and from Sahāranpur to Bahāwalpur in the other. It appears most probable that they continued to govern this territory in the fourth century as well. Probably the republic was divided into three sub-States. The Mālavas continued to hold central and south-eastern Rajputana during this period also.

A fourth century inscription from Bharatpur State refers to a President of the Yaudheya republic, elected by its members (*Yaudheya-gaṇa-puraskṛita*), but enjoying the title of *Mahāraja* and *Mahāsenāpati*.[30] No Ārjunāyana or Madra officer or President is known to us who can be definitely assigned to the fourth century. It appears that these republics were gradually veering round to the monarchical form of government during the third and fourth centuries A.D. The Bharatpur inscription shows that the Yaudheyas still continued to elect their Presidents, but permitted them to assume the royal title *Mahārāja*. The Mālavas permitted the heads of their States to become hereditary chiefs, though they did not allow them to assume royal titles. Among the Lichchhavis also, the presidency had developed into a hereditary monarchy, for Kumāradevī, the wife of Chandra-gupta I, was a Lichchhavi princess.

The absence of any reference to republics after *c.* A.D. 400 seems to be due to their having been transformed into hereditary monarchies. The view that Gupta imperialism was the cause of the destruction of the ancient Indian republics, advanced by the late Dr. Jayaswal.[31] does not seem to be correct. Samudra-gupta only imposed his imperial supremacy over them; there is no evidence to show that he interfered with their constitution. The Allahabad inscription shows that they continued to be republics even after their submission to Samudra-gupta.

The disappearance of the republics must, therefore, be ascribed to the tendency to make the presidency hereditary and the custom of giving royal titles to the Presidents. Why this tendency arose, it is difficult to state. It was probably felt that the monarchy was a better form of government, especially from the point of view of self-defence.

30 *CII,* III, 252.
31 Jayaswal, *History of India,* A.D. 150-350, pp. 208-11.

It is not unlikely that when the republican constitution degenerated, the republics virtually became scenes of oligarchic tyranny, and lost popular support. The growing popularity of the theory of the divinity of kingship may also have helped the republican Presidents in becoming hereditary chiefs. Whatever may be the real causes, the fact remains that the republics disappear from Indian history after c. A.D. 400.

2. *The Nāgas*

We have seen in the last volume how a number of Nāga families rose into prominence in U.P. and Gwalior in the third century A.D. They continued to dominate the Upper Gangetic plain during the first half of the fourth century as well. One Nāga family was ruling at Padmāvatī near Gwalior, a second one at Mathurā, and probably a third one at Ahichchhatra near Bareilly. Branches of some of these families seem to have carved small principalities in the northern U.P. Nāgadatta of Āryāvarta, mentioned in the Allahabad inscription, seems to have belonged to one of these families. King Achyuta of Ahichchhatra, who offered stubborn resistance to Samudra-gupta by c. A.D. 350 and perished, seems to have been also a Nāga ruler. His coin type, having a *chakra* on the reverse, imitates one of the well-known Nāga types. The coins of Achyuta are numerous; he may have ruled from c. A.D. 325 to 350. Who his predecessors were, we do not know. His house was probably a branch of the Nāga family ruling at Mathurā, about 100 miles west of Ahichchhatra.

The Purāṇas tell us that seven Nāga kings ruled at Mathurā before the rise of the Guptas. Their names are not given, and so we cannot tell which of them were on the throne during A.D. 300-50. The last ruler of the family was Gaṇapati-nāga; he is definitely known to have been overthrown by Samudra-gupta, and his coins are still found in large numbers in the bazars of Mathurā. He was, therefore, the last Nāga ruler of the house of Mathurā.

Perhaps the most powerful Nāga family during the first half of the fourth century was that at Padmāvatī, modern Padam Pawaya near Gwalior. According to the Purāṇas nine kings in this family ruled before the rise of the Guptas to power. Its ruler at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. was Bhavanāga (*c.* A.D. 305-40). His coins are found in large quantity, showing that he had a long reign. On some of them he takes the title *adhirāja*, suggesting that he was aspiring to the imperial status. The *triśūla*, that invariably appears on his coins, shows that he was a staunch devotee of Śiva like many of his predecessors. It is, therefore, very likely that the Bhāraśiva king, Bhavanāga, who was a great devotee of Śiva and whose daughter

was married to the Vākāṭaka crown-prince Gautamīputra, was none other than the Nāga ruler Bhavanāga of Padmāvatī.[32] The Vākāṭaka kingdom was at this time at the height of its power; Pravarasena I, the father of Gautamīputra, had assumed the imperial title of *Samrāṭ* and performed four horse-sacrifices. The condition of the Nāga kingdom under Bhavanāga was similar; it embraced a considerable part of Central U.P. and Central India, and included Gwalior, Kanpur Banda and Jhansi. Its capital Padmāvatī was a flourishing city, and its fame as an educational centre continued down to the days of Bhavabhūti (*c.* A.D. 750).

Gautamīputra, the son-in-law of Bhavanāga, predeceased his father, leaving behind him a son named Rudrasena who found himself in a sea of troubles at the death of his grandfather in *c.* 335. What exactly was the nature of the troubles of the new king, we do not know; possibly his right to succeed to the throne was challenged by his three ambitious uncles, who had carved out separate principalities for themselves. Whatever the case may be, Bhavanāga successfully championed the cause of his grandson and secured his ancestral throne for him. The Vākāṭaka copper plates never fail to describe Rudrasena as the *dauhitra* (daughter's son) of Bhavanāga, thus paying an indirect tribute to the great help received by Rudrasena from his maternal relations at a critical time in the history of the family.

Bhavanāga's rule came to an end in *c.* A.D. 340. It is probable that his successor was Nāgasena, who figures as one of the nine kings of Āryāvarta overthrown by Samudra-gupta. If we are to believe the tradition current in the seventh century, the downfall of Nāgasena was due to his ministers' disloyalty, who seem to have been won over by Samudra-gupta.

The Allahabad Pillar Inscription states that the Nāga rulers were annihilated by Samudra-gupta; they are significantly contrasted with the kings of the Deccan who were captured but subsequently released and permitted to rule as feudatories. It is therefore clear that the dominions of the Nāga rulers of Padmāvatī and Mathurā were annexed to the Gupta empire. Some Nāga chieftains seem to have survived as petty rulers. Princess Kuberanāgā, who was married to Chandragupta II, probably belonged to one such family. Some of the members of the dispossessed Nāga families were eventually absorbed in the ruling hierarchy of the new empire. Śarvanāga, who was the viceroy over a big province under Skanda-gupta, was probably a descendant of one of the Nāga houses overthrown by Samudra-gupta.

32 *JNSI*, V, 21-27.

3. *The Maghas of Kauśāmbī*

The Magha dynasty that rose to power in the Rewa-Kauśāmbī territory, continued its career to the end of the third century. By the beginning of the next century, Kauśāmbī seems to have been under the rule of a king named Nava who is known only from his coins, and who may or may not have been a Magha ruler. Nava was probably succeeded by king Pushyaśrī, who again is known from his coins only.[33]

Another king named Rudra, known from coins found at Kauśāmbī, has been identified by some as king Rudradeva of the Allahabad Pillar Inscription. In that case he must have been ruling at Kauśāmbī when it was annexed by Samudra-gupta.[34]

33 These coins were first published by the present writer, *JNSI*, IV, 13-17.
34 Above, p. 42.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE VĀKĀṬAKAS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY DYNASTIES

I. THE VĀKĀṬAKAS

1. *Early History*

THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY A.D. marks the commencement of an important epoch in the history of South India. The Śātavāhanas, who held a major part of the peninsula for more than four centuries and a half, disappear from the stage of history about this time. Puḷumāvi IV is the last known Śātavāhana king mentioned in the Purāṇas. His stone inscription has been found at Adoni in the Bellary district of Karṇāṭaka,[1] while his potin coins have been discovered at Tarhāḷā in the Akola district of Vidarbha.[2] He ruled, therefore, over an extensive country, probably stretching from the Narmadā in the north to the valley of the Tuṅgabhadrā in the south. On his downfall in *c.* A.D. 250, several small kingdoms grew up in the different provinces which were previously under his sway. The Ābhīras, whom the Purāṇas call Āndhrabhṛityas[3] and who probably held positions of power and vantage under the Śātavāhanas, usurped the provinces of Gujarāt, Koṅkaṇ and Northern Mahārāshṭra, including the districts of Nāsik and Khāndesh.[4] The Ikshvākus became supreme in the Andhra country. South Kosala and Kaliṅga were probably divided into small States, each ruled by a petty chief.[5] Vidarbha and Southern Mahārāshṭra were overrun by the Vākāṭakas.

The Vākāṭakas have generally been regarded as a northern dynasty.[6] This view is chiefly based on the Purāṇas. The section in the Purāṇas which mentions Pravīra and his father Vindhyaśakti, undoubtedly two Vākāṭaka kings, is introduced with the words 'Hear also the future kings of Vidiśā.' But it may be doubted if the scope of

1 *EI*, XIV, 153 ff.
2 *JNSI*, II, 92. The king's name occurs as Puḷuhāmavi on the coins.
3 *DKA*, 45.
4 See below, Sect. II.
5 These dynasties have been dealt with in Vol. II.
6 *PHAI*, 454; *NHIP*, VI, 96; *HCIP* II, 218.

this statement extends up to the passage in which the Vākāṭaka kings are mentioned. For just before it we get a reference to Śiśuka ruling at Purikā, which was situated to the south of the Narmadā and far from Vidiśā.[7]

Jayaswal held that the Vākāṭakas originally hailed from a place called Vākāṭa which he identified with Bāgāṭ in the northernmost part of the former Orchha State.[8] In support of his view he tried to show that three coins discovered at Kosam and another place in North India were issued by Pravarasena I, Rudrasena I, and Pṛithivīshena I.[9] The first two, according to him, bear the dates 76 and 100, respectively, which he refers to the era starting from A.D. 248. This era, though called by the name of the Chedi or Kalachuri era, was, according to Jayaswal, really started by the Vākāṭakas. But Jayaswal's readings of the legends and numerical symbols have been proved to be erroneous.[10] As a matter of fact, the Vākāṭakas never struck any coins in their own names, but utilised the monetary issues, first, of the Western Kshatrapas and, later, of the Guptas.[11] Again, the theory that the Chedi era was really founded by the Vākāṭakas is disproved by the fact that the Vākāṭakas themselves never used it, but dated all their records in regnal years. No early records of the Vākāṭakas have been found north of the Narmadā.[12] The identification of Bāgāṭ in the former Orchha State with Vākāṭa, the supposed home of the Vākāṭakas, cannot be accepted as certain in the absence of corroborative evidence. There is thus no valid argument in favour of the theory that the Vākāṭakas had their home in North India.

7 *DKA*, 49. According to *Harivaṁśa*, Purikā was situated at the foot of the Ṛikshavat mountain. This is to be identified with the Satpura mountain as Kālidāsa places it to the south of the Narmadā (*Raghuvaṁśa*, V. 44), and the *Vishṇupurāṇa* mentions it as the source of the rivers Tāpī and Payoshṇī (modern Pūrṇā). Some scholars, however, identify Ṛiksha with the central part of the Vindhya Hills (H. C. Raichaudhuri, *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, 123.).

8 *IHIJ*, 67 ff. Jayaswal thought that the dynastic name Vākāṭaka was derived from Vākāṭa as Traikūṭaka was from Trikūṭa.

9 *Ibid.*, 71 ff.

10 *JNSI*, V, 130 ff.

11 Hoards of silver coins of the Western Kshatrapas have been found in several districts of Vidarbha (*JBBRAS*, VII, 16; *JNSI*, XXII, 113 ff.; XXIII, 333 ff.; XXVII, 97 ff.; XXX, 92 ff. etc.). Gold coins of the Guptas have been found at Achalpur in Berar and Paṭāṇ in the Betul district of M.P.

12 The Nachnā and Gani inscriptions (Nos. 20 and 21) are ascribed by some scholars to Pṛithivīshena I (*NHIP*, VI, 109; *HCIP*, III, 179, n. 1), but palaeographic evidence shows that they belong to the reign of the second prince of that name (*EI*, XXIII, 173; *Belvalkar Felicitation Volume*, 286 ff.). The so-called Indore plates of Pravarasena II probably came from some place in Vidarbha (*IHQ*, XXIII, 156 ff.).

There are, on the other hand, several indications that they hailed from the South. Their Sanskrit as well as Prakrit inscriptions contain several expressions which bear striking similarity to those used in early Pallava grants.[13] The Bāsim plates, which record the earliest known Vākātaka grant, show that the Vākāṭakas took pride in calling themselves *Hāritīputras* 'the descendants of Hāritī'.[14] This descent is claimed by dynasties which ruled over the Karṇāṭaka country in the South, viz. the Viṇhukaḍa Chuṭu Sātakarṇis,[15] the Kadambas,[16] and the Early Chālukyas of Bādāmī.[17] Again, the early Vākāṭakas, such as Pravarasena I, Sarvasena and Vindhvaśakti II, are known to have assumed the title *Dharmamahārāja*,[18] which is noticed only in the records of the South such as the grants of the Pallavas[19] and the Kadambas.[20] In several other respects also Vākāṭaka records bear close affinity to southern grants like those of the Pallavas.[21] The earliest inscription which mentions the Vākāṭaka family is a pilgrim record incised in characters of about the third century A.D. on a pillar at Amarāvatī in the Andhra country.[22] It is also noteworthy that some of the hereditary ministers of the Vākāṭakas hailed from a place called Vallūra in the South.[23] This place appears to be the same as Velūr in the Yelagandal district of the Andhra State. Evidence is, therefore, overwhelming in support of the view that the Vākāṭakas originally came from the southern part of the peninsula.[24]

The Purāṇas do not name the royal family as Vākāṭaka. They perhaps refer to it as Vindhvaka after Vindhvaśakti, who was its founder, but this also is not free from doubt, because the description which the Purāṇas give of the States which rose on the downfall of the Vindhvakas does not agree with what we know of the political condition in the South after the disappearance of the Vākāṭakas.[25]

13 *CII*, V, 15.
14 *CII*, V, 96.
15 *EI*, XXXIV, 241.
16 *Ibid.* VIII, 31.
17 *IA*, XIX, 16.
18 *CII*, V, 96.
19 *EI*, I, 5.
20 *Ibid.* VI, 18.
21 *CII*, V, pp. xv ff.
22 *EI*, XV, 267.
23 *CII*, V, 115.
24 This view differs radically from that given in Vol. II, 328-29 (Ed.).
25 According to the Purāṇas, when the family of the Vindhyakas has passed away, three Bālhīkas will reign. They mention the names of Supratīka, Nābhīra and Śakyamāna. *DKA*, 50 ff. The first two of these are not known from any other source. Śakyamāna is probably identical with the Śaka king Māna whose coins have recently been found in the South. He seems to have flourished in the same age as Vindhyaśakti. See Section III.

Vindhyaśakti is the earliest known king of the Vākāṭaka dynasty. He is mentioned only in the Purāṇas and in an inscription (No. 26)[26] from Ajaṇṭā which calls him 'the banner of the Vākāṭaka family', and gives the valuable information that he was a *dvija* (Brāhmaṇa). Later Vākāṭaka grants mention Vishṇu-vṛiddha as the *gotra* of the Vākāṭakas.[27] The Ajaṇṭa inscription highly glorified him: 'He is said to have augmented his power by fighting great battles. When enraged, he was irresistible. He had a large cavalry by means of which he exacted submission from his enemies. After subjugating his foes he made a great effort for the acquisition of religious merit by exerting himself in the cause of the gods.' This description is no doubt vague, but it suggests that Vindhyaśakti greatly extended his kingdom and performed Vedic sacrifices which were apparently in abeyance during the rule of the later Śātavāhanas.

The capital from which Vindhyaśakti ruled is still uncertain. The Purāṇas apparently mention two capitals in connection with the rule of Vindhyaśakti's son Pravīra (i.e. Pravarasena I), viz, Purikā and Chanakā.[28] Of these, Chanakā was probably the original capital of the royal family. It has not yet been identified, Jayaswal's view that it was identical with Nachnā is not tenable, because, as we have seen, the Vākāṭakas did not probably hail from the North. Chanakā, like Vallūra, the original habitation of the ministerial family which served the Vākāṭakas for several generations, may have been situated somewhere in the central part of the Andhra State.[29] Vindhyaśakti may have continued from Chanakā notwithstanding the extension of his kingdom northward. He may be placed in the period *c.* A.D. 250-70.[30]

Vindhyaśakti was succeeded by his son Pravarasena I, who was the real founder of the Vākāṭaka Empire. The genealogy in the Sanskrit and Prakrit charters of the Vākāṭakas, which was probably first drafted in Vidarbha, starts from this king. Pravarasena I extended his sway further to the north as far as the Narmadā. He performed all the seven Soma sacrifices (*sapta-soma-saṁsthā*), including Vājapeya,[31] and also celebrated four Aśvamedhas, for which he must

26 The number within bracket refers to the serial number of inscriptions given at the end of the chapter.

27 The *gotra* is wrongly named as *Vṛishṇivṛiddha* in the Bāsim plates, *CII*, V, 96.

28 *IHIJ*, 16, n. 3.

29 The affinities which the Vākāṭaka records bear to those of the Śātavāhanas and Kadambas lend support to this hypothesis.

30 The Purāṇas say that he lived a long life of 96 years.

31 The 'seven Soma sacrifices' are usually enumerated as Agnishṭoma, Atyagnishṭoma, Ukthya, Shoḍaśin, Vājapeya, Atirātra and Āptoryāma. Vākāṭaka inscriptions mention

have led successful campaigns in different directions. He assumed the unique imperial title *Samrāṭ*, evidently after performing the Aśvamedha and Vājapeya sacrifices.[32] His Vājapeya sacrifices are mentioned in the Purāṇas as attended with munificent largesses.[33]

The extension of his kingdom so far northward must have necessitated the shifting of the original capital to a more central place. As stated before, the Purāṇas probably mention two capitals of Pravarasena I, viz Chanakā and Purikā. Chanakā, as we have seen, was probably the original capital. The other town Purikā was, according to the Purāṇas, the capital of a Nāga family for some generations. This family seems to have been an offshoot of the ruling dynasty of Vidiśā,[34] and may have previously acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sātavāhanas. If the account in the Purāṇas is correct and complete, the throne was, about this time, occupied by Śiśuka, the daughter's son of the Nāga ruler of Vidiśā. Pravarasena I seems to have deposed him and annexed his territory. He then shifted his capital to Purikā, which was situated somewhere in Vidarbha at the foot of the Sātpurā mountain. The Purāṇas credit Pravarasena I with a long reign of sixty years which is not unlikely in view of his performance of four Aśvamedhas and several Vājapeya sacrifices. He may have ruled from *c.* A.D. 270 to 330.

It is difficult to state the exact limits of Pravarasena I's dominion. He started no era and probably struck no coins. The Vākāṭakas do not seem to have insisted on the mention of their suzerainty in the records of their feudatories,[35] though the latter must have been forced to pay homage and tribute. There are thus no visible signs of their supremacy outside Vidarbha. That Gujarāt, Koṅkaṇ and Northern Mahārāshṭra were not incorporated in their empire seems

all these with the exception of Atyagnishṭoma for which they substitute Sādyaskra. Pravarasena I performed also the Bṛihaspatisava which was laid down for a Brāhmaṇa, as the Rājasūya was for a Kshatriya, after he had performed the Vājapeya. This corroborates the view that the Vākāṭakas were Brāhmaṇas by caste.

32 The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that he who performs the Vājapeya sacrifice becomes *samrāṭ*.

33 The Purāṇas use the plural number *Vājapeyaiḥ*, which shows that Pravarasena must have performed at least three Vājapeyas. *DKA*, 50. A MS. of the *Vāyupurāṇa* mentions *Vājimedhas* (Aśvamedhas) in place of Vājapeyas. *Ibid.*, 50, n. 35.

34 *Ibid.*, 49.

35 Except for the Nachnā and Ganj stone inscriptions we have no records of any princes mentioning explicitly the suzerainty of the Vākāṭakas. The Balaghat plates of Pṛithivīsheṇa II state that the commands of his father Narendrasena were honoured by the princes of Kosalā, Mekalā and Mālava. The kings who ruled at Śrīpura in South Kosala were probably the feudatories of the Vākāṭaka Emperor, but they do not name their suzerain. The Somavaṁśī king Bharata-bala *alias* Indra covertly refers to his suzerain Narendrasena. See his Bamhanī plates, *CII*, V, 83.

certain, for, firstly, no records of the Vākāṭakas have been found in these parts of the country,[36] and secondly, these provinces were probably included in the dominion of the Ābhīras, whose era was current throughout this territory.[37] In the east, South Kosala, which borders Vidarbha, may have come under Pravarasena's sphere of influence, though it was not directly under his administration. In the north, the Narmadā seems to have been the limit,[38] beyond which the Śakas of Mālwā and Kathiawar, the Bhāraśivas of Padmāvatī and the Maghas of Central India held sway. In the south, his kingdom may have extended to the Tuṅgabhadrā, if not beyond.

Pravarasena I thus shared with the Ābhīras the position of supremacy in the Deccan. He sought to strengthen his position still further by a matrimonial alliance with the Bhāraśivas, who belonged to the Nāga race. They appear to have originally been ruling in Vidarbha; for an early stone inscription of the Bhāra king Bhagadatta, of about the first century A.D., has been found at Pawni in the Bhandara district of Vidarbha.[39] Like the Maghas of South Kosala,[40] the Bhāras of Vidarbha seem to have raided North India, where they later on established themselves. Copper coins of their *Adhirāja* (lord paramount) Bhavanāga have been found at Padmāvatī, the well-known capital of the Nāgas, and other places in Central India.[41] The Bhāraśivas were staunch Śaivas. From Vākāṭaka records we learn about the popular belief that they had pleased the god Śiva by carrying his emblem, perhaps *triśūla* or trident, on their shoulder, and owed their royal position to his grace. They had performed as many as ten Aśvamedhas and were consecrated with the water of the Bhāgīrathī (Gaṅgā) which they had obtained by their valour. This description indicates that they had attained a position of supremacy in Madhya Pradesh in the second half of the third century A.D. Bhavanāga, the *Mahārāja* of the Bhāraśiva family, was a contemporary of Pravarasena I. He gave his daughter in marriage to the

36 The so-called Poona plates of Prabhāvatī-guptā record the grant of a village in the Wardhā district and, therefore, originally belonged to Vidarbha. *CII*, V, 7.

37 *CII*, IV, pp. xxvi ff.

38 It was only in the time of Pṛithivīsheṇa II that the Vākāṭakas extended their suzerainty to the north of the Narmadā, as shown by the Nachnā and Ganj inscriptions. Till then no Vākāṭaka records have been found in North India. The so-called Indore plates of Pravarasena II appear to be been granted at Rāmagiri and record the grant of a village in the Balaghat district. *Ibid.*, 39 ff.

39 *EI*, XXIV, 11 ff.

40 *DKA*, 51. *Megha* in this passage is generally admitted to be a mistake for *Magha*. Inscriptions and coins of the Maghas have been found in U.P. and Baghelkhand. *EI*, XXVI, 237 ff. Their history has been treated in Vol. II.

41 *JNSI*, V, 21 ff.

Vākāṭaka prince Gautamīputra, who was probably the eldest son of Pravarasena I. This matrimonial alliance seems to have greatly strengthened the power of Pravarasena, for it is invariably mentioned in all records of the descendants of Gautamīputra.

According to the Purāṇas, Pravarasena I had four sons, all of whom became kings.[42] Until recently this statement of the Purāṇas appeared incredible, for there was no evidence that the Vākāṭaka family had branched off so early. The discovery of the Bāsim plates has, however, shown that besides Gautamīputra mentioned in several Vākāṭaka grants, Pravarasena I had at least one other son named Sarvasena.[43] His name has also been subsequently noticed in an Ajaṇṭā inscription.[44] It seems therefore certain that the extensive empire of Pravarasena I was divided among his four sons after his death. The eldest branch probably continued to rule from the old capital Purikā. The second son Sarvasena established himself at the holy city of Vatsagulma, modern Bāsim in the Akola district. The Ajaṇṭā or Indhyādri range seems to have been the dividing line between these two kingdoms. The remaining two sons, whose names are still unknown, may have held parts of South Kosala and southern Mahārāshṭra, but their records have not been found.[45]

2. *Main Branch*

Gautamīputra, the eldest son of Pravarasena I, seems to have predeceased his father; for in the records of his successors the expression *Vākāṭakānām Mahārājaḥ*, which invariably precedes the name of every ruling prince of the family, is not used in his case. His son Rudrasena I succeeded Pravarasena I and ruled over the northern parts of Vidarbha. In later Vākāṭaka records he is invariably mentioned as the daughter's son of Bhavanāga, the *Mahārāja* of the Bhāraśivas, which indicates that he had the powerful support of the Nāgas of Padmāvatī. Only one inscription of his reign has been discovered, namely, that at Deotek in the Chanda district (No. 1). The palaeographical evidence shows that Rudrasena mentioned in it was the first king of that name.[46]

42 *DKA*, 50.

43 *CII*, V, 96.

44 *Ibid*, V, 105 ff. See Inscr. No. 25. This name was previously read as Rudrasena (I), but the reading is clearly incorrect as the latter prince was not the son of Pravarasena I as stated in the record.

45 The branch in South Kosala may have been overthrown by Mahendra, who was ruling there in the time of Samudra-gupta. That in Kuntala or South Mahārāshṭra seems to have been supplanted by the Rāshṭrakūṭas who rose in that part of the country in *c.* A.D. 350. See below, Sect. V.

46 The unlooped form of *n* used in this record shows that it is much earlier than the grants of Pravarasena II, which throughout use the looped form of the letter.

The Deotek inscription is undated, and we have no other means of fixing even approximately the limits of the reign of Rudrasena I. But he seems to have been a contemporary of the mighty Gupta king Samudra-gupta. The extermination of the Nāga princes of Āryāvarta by the latter deprived Rudrasena of their powerful support and crippled his power and prestige. Samudra-gupta next led a victorious campaign to the south, in the course of which he defeated Mahendra. the ruler of Kosala, who was probably a feudatory of the Vākāṭakas. Since then the rulers of South Kosala seem to have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas, in token of which they dated their records in the Gupta Era. The kingdom of the main branch thus became greatly circumscribed. It was confined to Northern Vidarbha extending from the Narmadā in the north to the Ajaṇṭā range in the south, and from the eastern limit of the Khandesh district in the west to the western boundary of Chhattisgarh in the east.

Samudra-gupta returned to the north after subjugating the rulers of Kaliṅga, Andhra, Kāñchī and other southern States along the eastern coast. For some reason not known to us, he does not seem to have crossed swords with the Vākāṭakas.[47] There are no signs of Gupta supremacy in the Vākāṭaka records of that age. The Vākāṭakas did not adopt the Gupta Era, but always dated their grants in the regnal years. As they themselves struck no coins, they were not loth to use the gold coins of the Guptas as they used the silver currency of the Śakas, but that was certainly not an indication of Gupta suzerainty. Samudra-gupta may have thought it prudent to have friendly relations with his southern neighbour who occupied a strategic position with respect to the kingdom of the powerful Western Kshatrapas, whom he had not yet subdued.

Rudrasena I was succeeded in *c.* A.D. 345 by his son Pṛithivīsheṇa I. This king seems to have pursued a peaceful policy, which brought happiness and prosperity to his people. Across the northern frontier of this kingdom, the Gupta Emperor Samudra-gupta and Chandra-gupta II had adopted an aggressive policy, subjugating their neighbours and annexing their territories. Pṛithivīsheṇa wisely refrained from being entangled in these wars and devoted himself to the consolidation of his kingdom in the South and the amelioration of the condition of his subjects. The results of his policy are summed up in the official Vākāṭaka records in the following words: 'Pṛithivīsheṇa (I) had sons and grandsons and a continuous

47 Some scholars identify Rudrasena I with the prince Rudradeva exterminated by Samudra-gupta, but the identification does not appear to be correct as the latter was a ruler of North India. For other reasons, see *IC*, IX, 103 ff.

supply of treasure and army which had been accumulating for a hundred years.'

Pṛithivīshena I had probably a long reign which seems to have terminated about A.D. 400. About A.D. 395, Chandra-gupta II, who had by this time become the lord paramount of a large part of North India, launched his attack on the Śaka Satraps of Mālwā and Kāthiāwār. It is not unlikely that in this campaign Chandra-gupta sought the alliance of his powerful neighbour, the Vākāṭaka king Pṛithivīshena I. After his victory Chandra-gupta sought to cement the political alliance with the Vākāṭakas by giving his daughter Prabhāvatī-guptā in marriage to the Vākāṭaka prince Rudrasena II, the son of Pṛithivīshena. Like his father, Pṛithivīshena I was a Śaiva, for he is described in Vākāṭaka records as a fervent devotee of Maheśvara. During his time the Vākāṭaka capital seems to have been shifted to Nandivardhana (modern Nandardhan or Nagardhan), about 28 miles from Nagpur. This place is surrounded by strongly fortified forts such as Bhivgarh and Ghughusgarh, which may have been the reason for its selection for a royal capital.[48]

Pṛithivīshena lived to a good old age. The description in the Vākāṭaka grants shows that when he died his grandson Divākarasena had already been born. Pṛithivīshena was succeeded by his son Rudrasena II. Unlike his ancestors, who were all Śaivas, this king was a devotee of Chakrapāṇi (Vishṇu), to whose grace he ascribed his prosperity. This change in religious creed may have been due to the influence of his wife Prabhāvatī-guptā, who, like her father Chandra-gupta II, was a worshipper of Vishṇu.[49] She greatly venerated the foot-prints (*pāda-mūlas*) of Rāma on the hill of Rāmagiri, where she made both her known grants (Nos. 2 and 8). This Rāmagiri is modern Rāmṭek, a well-known place of pilgrimage, which lies only about three miles from the then Vākāṭaka capital Nandivardhana.[50]

Rudrasena II died after a short reign of about five years, leaving behind at least two sons Divākarasena and Dāmodarasena, who succeeded him one after the other. Divākarasena was a minor at the time of his father's death. So Prabhāvatī-guptā looked after the

48 *JASB.* (N.S.), XXIX, 160. Nandivardhana retained its ancient name down to the time of the Bhoslas, for it is mentioned in the Sanskrit play *Purañjanacharita* (Vidarbha Saṁśodhan Maṇḍal—Ed.) staged at Nagpur. See p. 7. Its identification with Nandpur, 34 miles north of Nagpur (*ibid.*, 159) is therefore untenable.

49 The Poona plates record a grant of a village which Prabhāvati-guptā made after offering it to the feet of the Bhagavat, who was evidently Rāmachandra. The Ṛiddhapur plates (No. 8) were issued from the feet of the lord of Rāmagiri (*Rāmagiri-svāminaḥ pāda-mūlāt*). *CII*, V, 35.

50 For the identification of Rāmagiri, see *Studies in Indology* (*SI*), Vol. I (1968), 12 ff.; Vol. IV, 42 ff.

affairs of the State as the regent for her minor son. The so-called Poona plates, which record the earliest grant of this branch were issued by Prabhāvatī-guptā as regent for the *Yuvarāja* Divākarasena, in the thirteenth year, evidently of the boy prince's reign. This shows that Divākarasena was probably less than twelve years old at the time of his accession.[51] As he was probably born before the death of his grandfather, his father Rudrasena II may not have reigned for more than eight years at most. This charter is inscribed in the acute-angled script of North India, not in the box-headed characters, which were current in Vidarbha in the age of the Vākāṭakas. Besides, it gives the genealogy of the Guptas and not of the Vākāṭakas. All this plainly shows that Gupta influence was predominant at the Vākāṭaka court during the regency of Prabhāvatī-guptā. Chandra-gupta II had evidently deputed some of his trusted officers and statesmen to assist his daughter in governing the kingdom.[52]

Divākarasena also seems to have been shortlived. He was succeeded by his brother Dāmodarasena, who, on accession, appears to have assumed the name Pravarasena after his illustrious ancestor.[53] More than a dozen grants of this prince have been found in the different districts of Vidarbha such as Amraoti, Wardha, Betul, Chhindwara, Nagpur, Bhandara and Balaghat. The latest of these is that recorded on the Pawni plates (No. 15), dated the thirty-second regnal year.[54] He had, therefore, probably a long reign of about thirty-five years from *c.* A.D. 420 to 455.

51 In ancient times princes attained age when they completed the age of 24 years. *EI*, XX, 79. D. C. Sircar thinks that the age of maturity for princes as for other people was sixteen years. But this seems doubtful. See discussion on this question in *JASB*, L. XII, 71 ff.

52 One of these was probably the famous Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa, who seems to have stayed at the Vākāṭaka court for some time. He composed his world-famous lyric *Meghadūta* at Rāmagiri, which is undoubtedly identical with Rāmṭek, three miles from the Vākāṭaka capital Nandivardhana. His graphic description of the six year old prince Sudarśana in the 18th canto of the *Raghuvaṁśa* may have been suggested by what he observed at the Vākāṭaka court.

53 According to R. C. Majumdar, Prabhāvatī-guptā and three sons—Divākarasena, Dāmodarasena and Pravarasena, and Dāmodarasena ruled for 15 years before Pravarasena II. *JRASBL*, XII, 1 ff. This view does not seem to be probable. No grants made by Dāmodarasena have been discovered. Besides, the description of Prabhāvatī-guptā in the Ṛiddhapur plates, viz *Vākāṭakānāṁ Mahārāja-śrī-Dāmodarasena-Pravarasena jananī*, points to Dāmodarasena's identity with Pravarasena. Otherwise, it would look strange that the title *VākāṭakānāṁMahārāja* is used with Dāmodarasena who was dead at the time and not with Pravarasena who was reigning. Besides, there does not seem to be any reason for the omission of Divākarasena's name from the aforementioned expression. For these reasons Pravarasena seems to be the coronation name of Dāmodarasena. For a full discussion of this matter, see *CII*, V, pp. vii ff.

54 *Nagpur University Journal*, XVIII, 73 ff.

Till his 11th regnal year Pravarasena II continued to rule from the old capital Nandivardhana. Thereafter, some time before the 18th regnal year,[55] he founded a new city which he named Pravarapura and made his capital. Pravarapura is probably identical with Pavnār in the Wardha district, where several sculptural remains of the Vākāṭaka age have been discovered.[56] They show that there was a magnificent temple of Rāmachandra there. It was probably erected by Pravarasena for his mother Prabhāvatī-guptā, who was a devotee of that god.

Another grant, made by Prabhāvatī-guptā, may be mentioned here. It was recorded on the plates found at Ṛiddhapur (No. 8) in the Amraoti district of Vidarbha and is dated in the 19th regnal year of Pravarasena II. In this grant, also, Prabhāvatī-guptā mentions her Gupta pedigree in detail, while she names the Vākāṭaka family only in connection with her husband. This clearly shows how proud she was of her Gupta descent. In this grant she describes herself as having long-lived sons and grandsons.[57] The grant was made at the foot-print of the lord of Rāmagiri (modern Rāmṭek in the Nagpur district), which clearly indicates that the holy place continued to receive royal attention even after the shifting of the capital to Pravarapura. Pravarasena II was a devotee of Śambhu (Śiva), by whose grace he is said to have established on the earth the reign of Kṛita-yuga or golden age. He was a liberal monarch, as more than a dozen grants made by him have been discovered so far. Having come into contact with such an illustrious poet as Kālidāsa,[58] he also acquired a taste for poetic composition. Though himself a Śaiva, he composed, probably at the instance of his mother, the Prākṛit *Kāvya Setubandha* in glorification of Rāma. This work has been highly eulogised by Sanskrit poets and rhetoricians. Daṇḍin calls

55 *CII*, V, 26.

56 Pravarapura is probably identical with Pavnār (Sanskrit, Pravaranagara) in the Wardhā district, where several ancient images of the Gupta-Vākāṭaka age have been discovered. *Sarupa-Bhāratī*, 271 ff.; *CII*, V, pp. lx ff. They show that there was a magnificent temple of Rāmachandra erected there by Pravarasena II probably at the instance of Prabhāvatī-guptā.

57 Prabhāvatī-guptā is described in these plates as *sāgra-varsha-śata-diva-putra-pautrā*, where *diva* is probably a mistake for *jīva*. This expression is usually taken to refer to the long life of Prabhāvatī-guptā. *HCIP*, III, 183. R C. Majumdar takes the expression quite literally. His scheme of Vākāṭaka chronology based on it (*JRASBL*, XII, 1 ff.) involves several suppositions and appears unconvincing. (*CII*, V, pp. vii ff.) The expression was probably intended to convey that Prabhāvatī-guptā had at that time living sons and grandsons who, it was hoped, would be long-lived. Compare the use of *dīrghāyus* in connection with the twelve-year old Lava in the *Uttara-rāmacharita*, IV, 26.

58 This can only be regarded as probable. (Ed.)

it an ocean of gems in the form of good sayings. Bāṇa says that by means of this *Setu* the fame of Pravarasena crossed the ocean as Rāma's army of monkeys had done before by means of a bridge. Ānandavardhana, the famous Sanskrit critic, has also paid in the *Dhvanyāloka* his tribute of praise to this *kāvya*. From the ninth verse of the first *āśvāsa* it seems that Pravarasena began to compose this work soon after his accession and occasionally received assistance from others in the correction of mistakes. Tradition avers that the work was composed by Kālidāsa for the sake of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena by the command of *Mahārājādhirāja* Vikramāditya, who is probably identical with Pravarasena II's maternal grandfather Chandragupta II.[59] Perhaps Kālidāsa's contribution was confined to giving occasional help and final touches to the composition of his royal friend and pupil Pravarasena II.

Narendrasena, who succeeded his father Pravarasena I in *c.* A.D. 455, is known only from the Balaghat (No. 18) and Mahurzari (No. 19) plates. The description in these plates that he enticed the royal fortune by the noble qualities which he had already acquired suggests that there was some trouble about his succession. Perhaps he superseded his elder brother as conjectured by Kielhorn. Narendrasena married the Kuntala princess Ajjhitabhaṭṭārikā, who probably belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭa family founded by Mānāṅka.[60] She may have been the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Avidheya, who flourished from *c.* A.D. 440 to 455.

Narendrasena seems to have followed an aggressive policy and made some conquests in the east and the north. The afore-mentioned plates of his son Pṛthivīsheṇa II state that he had, by his prowess, subjugated his enemies and that his commands were honoured by the lords of Kosalā, Mekalā and Mālava.[61] Of these countries Mālava had till then been under the direct administration of the Guptas since the overthrow of the Western Kshatrapas. Govinda-gupta (p. 65), who was holding the country at the time, may have acknowledged the supremacy of Narendrasena.[62] Mekalā is the country near Amarakaṇṭak, where the Narmadā called *Mekala-sutā*, takes its rise. Bha-

59 See Rāmadāsa's introduction to his commentary on the *Setubandha*, I, 1. The objection to this identification that Pravarasena, being a Śaiva, could not have composed this *kāvya* in glorification of Rāma (*HCIP*, III, 183 ff.) has no weight, for we have an analogous instance of Śaiva Kālidāsa composing *Raghuvaṁśa*. Pravarasena must have composed this *kāvya* at the instance of his mother, who was a devotee of Rāma. Some identify the author of this *kāvya* with a king of Kashmir, but the theory seems to be wholly unfounded. *Studies in Indology*, I (1968), 111 ff.

60 The history of this family is treated below.

61 *CII*, V, 81.

62 Cf. above, p. 65. (Ed.)

ratabala of the Somavaṁśī dynasty, who was ruling over this territory, covertly refers to his suzerain Narendrasena in his Bamhani plates.[63] Kosalā is, of course, Dakshiṇa Kosala. The contemporary ruler was probably Bhīmasena I, the grandfather of Bhīmasena II who issued the Āraṅg plates in A.D. 501-2.[64] Besides these, Narendrasena seems to have annexed the Anūpa country, of which the capital was Māhishmatī. That this country was incorporated in the dominion of the Vākāṭakas appears likely from a narrative in the *Daśakumāra-charita*.[65] Narendrasena may have conquered this country when he extended his suzerainty to Mālwā.

Narendrasena, who was probably a grown-up man at the time of his accession,[66] may have had a short reign of about 10 years (A.D. 455-65). Towards the close of his reign the Vākāṭaka territory was invaded by the Nala king Bhavadatta-varman,[67] who was ruling over the modern Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining parts of the Vizagapatam district, as the coins and inscriptions of the family have been found in those parts of the country. Bhavadatta pressed as far as Nandivardhana, the former capital of the Vākāṭakas, which he occupied for some time. The Ṛiddhapur plates (No. 78), which were issued by his son Arthapati from Nandivardhana, show that a considerable portion of the Vākāṭaka kingdom was annexed by the Nalas and was under their occupation for some years.

The Vākāṭakas also admit this disaster to their arms. The Balaghat and Mahurzari plates (Nos. 18, 19) state that Ṛithivīsheṇa II, the son of Narendrasena, raised his sunken family. For some time, however, he was forced to move to the east and to fix his capital at Padmapura, modern Padampur near Amgaon in the Bhandara district.[68] Ṛithivīsheṇa consolidated his position at this capital and after some time ousted the enemy from his ancestral country. He even carried the war into the enemy's territory and stormed and devastated his capital Pushkarī, as admitted in the Podagarh stone inscription (No. 80) of Skanda-varman, the brother of Arthapati. After this we find no other records of the Nalas in Vidarbha.

It is not known whether Ṛithivīsheṇa II continued to rule at Padmapura or again shifted his capital to some other place in Vidarbha.

63 See below, Sect. VI, 3.

64 See below, Sect. VI, 1.

65 See below at the end of subsection 3.

66 His father Pravarasena II had a long reign of more than 32 years. *Nagpur University Journal*, Vol. XVIII (1967), 73 ff.

67 See below, Sect. VII.

68 For the identification of Padmapura, see *Studies in Indology*, I (1968), 22 ff.

In any case Padmapura retained its importance for a long time; for it attracted learned Brāhmaṇas like Gopāla, an ancestor of the famous Sanskrit dramatist Bhavabhūti, who performed the Vājapeya and other sacrifices there. In his Sanskrit plays Bhavabhūti mentions Padmapura, situated in Vidarbha, as the home of his ancestors.

Pṛithivīsheṇa II soon retrieved his position in the north also and even pressed farther than his father; for two stone inscriptions of his feudatory Vyāghradeva, who explicitly acknowledges his suzerainty, have been discovered at Ganj and Nachna, in the former Ajaigarh and Jaso States respectively in Bundelkhand.[69] This Vyāghradeva probably belonged to the Uchchakalpa dynasty; for several records of this dynasty mentioning the name have been found in the former adjoining State of Nagod. As Jayaratha, the son af *Mahārāja* Vyāghra, was ruling from *c.* G. 170 to 190 (A.D. 490-510),[70] Vyāghradeva may be referred to the period A.D. 470-90. He was thus a contemporary of Pṛithivīsheṇa II. The Uchchakalpas were previously feudatories of the Guptas, whose era they used. They transferred their allegiance to the Vākāṭakas when the power of the Guptas declined in the fifth century A.D., though they continued to use the Gupta Era which had become well established in that part of the country.[71]

Unlike most of his ancestors, Pṛithivīsheṇa II was a worshipper of Vishṇu as he is described as *paramabhāgavata* in his plates. He is the last-known member of this senior branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty. He may have been followed by one or two princes, but their names are not known to us. Perhaps Harisheṇa of the Vatsagulma branch, who made extensive conquests in all directions, incorporated Northern Vidarbha in his kingdom after the death of Pṛithivīsheṇa II.

Thus ended the main branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty after a glorious rule of more than two centuries. It produced a series of illustrious rulers who were capable leaders of men, wise administrators, and liberal patrons of religion and learning. None of the kings after Pravarasena I assumed imperial titles, but there is no reason to doubt

69 Nos. 20 and 21. Some scholars identify Pṛithivīsheṇa of these records with the first king of that name (*PHAI*, 455; *HCIP*. III, 179). Their view that the palaeography of the Nachnā and Ganj inscriptions is decidedly earlier than that of other Vākāṭaka records (*JRASBL*, XII, 73) does not appear to be correct. See examination of this palaeographic evidence in *Belvalkar Felicitation Volume*, 287 ff. The records, therefore, belong to the reign of Pṛithivīsheṇa II, when Uchchakalpa Vyāghra flourished.

70 His known dates are G. 174 and G. 177. The earliest known date of his successor Śarvanātha is G. 191. These dates probably refer to the Gupta and not to the Kalachuri era. *EI*, XXIII, 171 ff.

71 For a different view, cf. pp. 38-39 above. (Ed.)

that they maintained their independence even in the heyday of Gupta rule. No lithic monuments of their time have survived in Northern Vidarbha, but two *kāvyas*, *Meghadūta* and *Setubandha*—one in Sanskrit and the other in Prakrit—have immortalised their age. Many other literary works, which gave the Vaidarbhī *rīti* the first place among all *rītis*, must have been composed during this period, but they have all passed into oblivion.

3. *The Vatsagulma Branch*

The existence of this branch was unknown till the discovery of the Bāsim plates in 1939. Several members of this family were indeed mentioned in the inscription in cave XVI at Ajaṇṭā (No. 26), but owing to a sad mutilation of that record, their names were misread. These names have since been restored, and it has been conclusively shown that the princes who ruled the country south of the Ajaṇṭā or Indhyādri range belonged to a different branch of the Vākāṭaka family.

The founder of this branch was Sarvasena mentioned in both the Bāsim plates and the Ajaṇṭā inscription as a son of Pravarasena I. He was presumably one of his younger sons. The country under his rule appears to have stretched south of the Ajaṇṭā range up to the bank of the Godāvarī. He made Vatsagulma, modern Bāsim in the Akola district of Vidarbha, his capital. This was an ancient city. The country round it, called Vātsagulmaka, is mentioned in the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana. Vatsagulma was also regarded as a holy *tīrtha*, and according to a local *māhātmya* it was so called because the sage Vatsa made by his austerities an assemblage (*gulma*) of gods come down and settle in the vicinity of his hermitage.[72] In the Vākāṭaka age it became a great centre of learning and culture and gave its name Vachchhomī (Sanskrit, Vātsagulmī) to the best poetic style.[73]

From the Bāsim plates we learn that Sarvasena continued the title *Dharmamahārāja*, which his father Pravarasena I had assumed, in accordance with the tradition in South India. The description that the Ajaṇṭā inscription gives of him is quite conventional. He was a liberal patron of learning and himself a poet of no mean order, for his Prakrit *kāvya*, named *Harivijaya*, is praised by Daṇḍin in his

72 The *Jayamaṅgalā*, a commentary on Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra*, gives another derivation of this place-name. According to it, Vatsa and Gulma were two princes of Dakshiṇāpatha, and the country in which they settled came to be known as Vatsagulmaka.

73 Vatsagulma retained its importance as a centre of learning and culture for a long time; for Rājaśekhara describes it as a pleasure-resort of the god of love where the mythical *Kāvyapurusha* married *Sāhityavidyā* (*Kāvyamīmāṁsā* (*GOS*, No. 1), 10).

Avantisundarīkathā.[74] Ānandavardhana, the famous critic of the ninth century A.D., also mentions it in his *Dhvanyāloka* as an instance of a good *kāvya* in which a traditional story was altered to suit the development of the intended sentiment.[75] Kuntaka, the author of the *Vakroktijīvita,* states that like Kālidāsa Sarvasena also composed poetry characterized by natural delicacy. Besides this *kāvya,* Sarvasena composed Prakrit *gāthās,* which were later included in the *Sattasaī*.[76] As his father Pravarasena I closed his reign about A.D. 330, he may be placed in the period *c.* A.D. 330-55.

Sarvasena was followed by his son Vindhyasena, who is named Vindhyaśakti (II) in the Bāsim plates. He pursued a vigorous policy and defeated the lord of Kuntala, his southern neighbour, who was probably Mānāṅka, the founder of the Early Rāshṭrakūṭa Dynasty ruling over the Southern Marāṭhā country.[77] The victory, however, was not decisive; for Mānāṅka also is said to have harassed the rulers of Vidarbha and Aśmaka. The former probably belonged to the Vatsagulma branch whose kingdom was contiguous to Kuntala. As both Mānāṅka and Vindhyasena claim victory over each other, neither of them seems to have emerged completely triumphant after this war.

Vindhyasena or Vindhyaśakti II made the Bāsim grant in his 37th regnal year. It was issued from the capital Vatsagulma. Like his predecessors, Vindhyasena also assumed the title *Dharma-Mahārāja*. He was probably a contemporary of Prithivīsheṇa I of the main branch, and, like him, may have closed his reign in *c.* A.D. 400.

Vindhyasena was followed by his son Pravarasena II, who must be distinguished from the homonymous prince of the main branch who ruled slightly later from two capitals, Nandivardhana and Pravarapura. The Ajaṇṭā inscription states that he became exalted by his excellent, powerful and liberal rule. He seems to have had a comparatively short reign; for when he died, his son was only eight years old.

The name of this boy prince, who is said to have ruled well, is lost in the Ajaṇṭā inscription. He was succeeded by his son Devasena, whose fragmentary copper-plate inscription (No. 25) discovered somewhere in Vidarbha, has recently been published. This plate was also issued from Vatsagulma which shows that the city continued to be the royal capital to the last. Another stone inscription (No. 26) which has recently come to notice at Bāsim is dated in the Śaka year 380

74 For the contents of this *kāvya,* see *Studies in Indology,* I (1968), 116 ff.

75 *Loc. cit.*

76 *Ibid.,* I (1968), 94 ff.

77 See below, Sect. V.

(A.D. 458-59). It records the construction of a tank called Sudarśana by Svāmilladeva, a servant of Devasena. Devasena may have ruled from c. A.D. 450 to 475.

Devasena had a very righteous and capable minister named Hastibhoja. His great-grandfather Ravi was the son of a Brāhmaṇa from a Kshatriya wife, and is said to have ruled over the whole territory. Hastibhoja's ancestors seem to have been hereditary and trusted ministers of the Vatsagulma Vākāṭakas. Devasena entrusted the government of the kingdom to him and gave himself to the enjoyment of pleasures.[78] Hastibhoja is eulogised in the Ajaṇṭā and Ghaṭotkacha cave inscriptions which were caused to be incised by his son Varāhadeva.[79]

Devasena was succeeded by his son Harisheṇa in c. A.D. 475. He is the last-known king of this line. He was a brave and ambitious prince who carried his victorious arms in all directions. Unfortunately, the Ajaṇṭā inscription (No. 26) which describes his conquests in lines 14-15 is sadly mutilated, but the extant portion mentions the names of several countries which were either overrun by him or were made to acknowledge his suzerainty. These countries lay in all the four directions of Vidarbha, viz Avanti in the north, Kosala, Kaliṅga and Andhra in the east, Lāṭa and Trikūṭa in the west, and Kuntala in the south. It would seem, therefore, that Harisheṇa's supremacy was recognized throughout the Deccan extending from Mālwā in the north to Kuntala in the south, and from the Arabian sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east.

Harisheṇa's conquests do not seem to have led to the permanent annexation of this vast territory. The rulers of these countries were probably allowed to enjoy their respective kingdoms on condition of regular payment of tribute. As we have already seen, Mālwā and the adjoining parts of Central India had previously submitted to Narendrasena and Pṛithivīsheṇa II of the senior branch of the Vākāṭakas.[80] Their subjugation by Harisheṇa plainly shows that he had already

78 This description was taken by Jayaswal to mean that Devasena abdicated in favour of his son Harisheṇa (*IHIJ*, 75), but verses 12-16 of the Ajaṇṭā inscription convey no such idea. The description is intended only to glorify the minister Hastibhoja.

79 Jayaswal thought that the Ghaṭotkacha cave inscription (No. 27) was put up by Hastibhoja during the reign of the Vākāṭaka Devasena, who is mentioned as flourishing in line 10. The lower part of the inscription is very much mutilated, but line 13 mentions Harisheṇa, the son of Devasena and line 18 contains the name of Varāhadeva partly mutilated. This leaves no doubt that it was Varāhadeva who caused the Ghaṭotkacha cave to be excavated. *CII*, V, 117.

80 Above, p. 141.

incorporated the kingdom of the main branch into his own dominion.[81] In Kaliṅga and Andhra, Harisheṇa's incursions seem to have led to the establishment of new royal families. Just about this time, in A.D. 498, the Gaṅga era was started, marking the foundation of a new power in Kaliṅga.[82] In Andhra Harisheṇa seems to have supplanted the contemporary Śālaṅkāyana king and given the throne to the Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhava-varman I who married a Vākāṭaka princess, probably Harisheṇa's daughter or some near relative.[83] That Harisheṇa's suzerainty was recognized in the west beyond the confines of Vidarbha is also shown by the inscription which a ruler of Ṛishīka (modern Khandesh) has left in Cave XVII at Ajaṇṭā (No. 27). In Kuntala the Rāshṭrakūṭas were ultimately defeated and had to acknowledge the supremacy of Harisheṇa, but they continued to rule the country till long afterwards.[84]

We have seen above that Vindhyasena probably closed his reign in *c.* A.D. 400. He was followed by four princes whose reigns may have covered a century. The last of them Harisheṇa may, therefore, be placed in the period A.D. 475-500.

Harisheṇa had a pious, liberal and capable minister named Varāhadeva, the son of the afore-mentioned Hastibhoja, who was liked both by the king and the subjects. He caused the Ajaṇṭā Cave XVI to be excavated and decorated with sculptures and picture-galleries. This cave is considered to be in some respects the most elegant at Ajaṇṭā. The inscription which he caused to be incised on a wall of its verandah is our chief source of information for the history of the Vatsagulma line.

He also caused the Ghaṭotkacha cave at Gulwāḍā, a few miles from Ajaṇṭā, to be excavated, where he has left an inscription describing his ancestors.

Harisheṇa is the last known king of this line. He may have been followed by one or two kings, but even their names have not come down to us. In any case, the dynasty seems to have been overthrown

81 The Uchchakalpa kings, who ruled further to the north, seem to have thrown off the Vākāṭaka yoke after the death of Pṛithivīsheṇa II; for Jayanātha, the son of Vyāghradeva, does not mention any Vākāṭaka suzerain in his copper-plate grants. See *CII*, III, 117 ff.

82 *Studies in Indology*, IV, 166 ff. As shown there, the Gaṅga era commenced on *Chaitra śudi*. 1 in the Śaka year 420 (14th March A.D. 498). [There is, however, difference of opinion on this point—Ed.]

83 See below, Sect. XI.

84 As conjectured by R. G. Bhandarkar, Govinda who invaded the Chālukyan territory during the civil war of Mangaleśa and Pulakeśin II probably belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭa lineage.

in *c.* A.D. 550[85] by the early Kalachuris. The silver coins of Kṛishṇarāja, who heads the genealogical list in early Kaṭachchuri or Kalachuri inscriptions, have been found over an extensive country stretching from Vidiśā in the north to Nasik and Karhad in the south, and from Bombay in the west to the districts of Betul and Amraoti in the east. This Kalachuri king flourished in *c.* A.D. 550-75. He seems to have raised his empire over the ruins of the Vākāṭaka dominion.

The causes which led to the sudden disintegration and downfall of the vast Vākāṭaka empire have not been recorded in history, but Daṇḍin's *Daśakumāracharita,* which was composed within about a hundred and twenty-five years after the fall of the Vākāṭakas, seems to have preserved a living tradition about the last period of Vākāṭaka rule. This Sanskrit work, in its eighth chapter called 'Viśrutacharita', narrates the adventures of Viśruta, one of the ten Kumāras who were the followers of the prince Rājavāhana of Magadha.[86] This narrative shows that the central power in the Vākāṭaka empire became weak, and feudatories began to show signs of revolt during the reign of Harisheṇa's misguided successor, who led a dissolute life. There was chaos and confusion everywhere in the Vākāṭaka kingdom which led to its invasion by the Kadambas of Vanavāsī (North Kanara) at the instigation of the ruler of Aśmaka. Owing to the treacherous defection of several feudatories, the Vākāṭaka king suffered a disastrous defeat and was killed in the battle which was fought on the bank of the Wardhā. His son, who was then a boy of tender age, was removed by a trusted minister to Māhishmatī, which was then ruled by his uncle. The ruler of Aśmaka then annexed Vidarbha to his kingdom. As Daṇḍin's narrative ends abruptly, we do not know whether Harisheṇa's grandson regained the ancestral kingdom with external help. He may have succeeded in doing so with the aid of Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhava-varman I, who was his relative and must have been the most powerful king of the time inasmuch as he performed as many as eleven Aśvamedhas. This conjecture receives support from the find of Vishṇukuṇḍin coins in recent excavations at Paunar (ancient Pravarapura).[87] But neither the Vākāṭaka prince nor his Vishṇukuṇḍin relative could have retained his hold over Vidarbha for a long time; for, as we have seen, the Kalachuri Kṛishṇarāja, who, in the meanwhile, had established himself at Māhishmatī, soon extended his rule

85 Svāmirāja, who was ruling over Vidarbha in A.D. 573, was probably a feudatory of the Kalachuri Kṛishṇarāja. He has dated his grant in the Kalachuri-Chedi era which was first introduced in Vidarbha in the time of the Kalachuris.

86 For a summary of the narrative and the historical data it furnishes see *ABORI,* XXVI, 20 ff.; *Studies in Indology,* I, 1968, p. 182.

87 *Paunar Excavations* (1967), 13 ff.

to Vidarbha. The Somavaṁśīs, Gaṅgas and Vishṇukuṇḍins asserted their independence in the east, while the Rāshṭrakūṭas gradually gained strength in the south. Thus disappeared the last vestiges of Vākāṭaka power after a glorious rule of about 300 years.

II. THE ĀBHĪRAS

We have seen before[88] that on the downfall of the Śātavāhanas the Ābhīra Īśvarasena established himself in Northern Mahārāshṭra. He started an era in A.D. 249, which, with the extension of the Ābhīra rule, seems to have spread to parts of Central India (ancient Anūpa), Gujarat and Koṅkaṇ. According to the Purāṇas, there were ten Ābhīra rulers, but no other name except Īśvarasena is definitely known to have belonged to that family. Another king Rudrasena mentioned in the Devni-Mori (Sabarkantha district) casket inscription also probably belonged to the Ābhīra family.[89] The inscription is dated in the year 127, which probably belongs to the Ābhīra era. It is called there the year of the Kathika kings, which probably signifies that Kathika was the family name of the Ābhīras. One of the other kings may have been Koṭṭarāja who, according to Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra,* was assassinated by a washerman.[90]

The Purāṇas assign a period of only 67 years to the ten Ābhīra rulers, which gives a very low average of 6.7 years per reign. The correct period seems to have been 167 years given by a manuscript of the *Vāyupurāṇa*.[91] Ābhīra rule may, therefore, have ended in *c.* A.D. 417.[92]

Until recently we had no information about the feudatories of the Ābhīras, but from three copper-plate inscriptions (Nos. 32-34) originally discovered in Khandesh,[93] we get the names of three rulers, viz

88 Vol. II, 231-33.

89 *Studies in Indology (SI),* IV, 120 ff. [An inscription of an Ābhīra king, named Īśvaradeva is referred to in the *Indian Archaeology,* 1967-68, p. 52. It is dated in Śaka 254. But the inscription has not yet been published (Ed.).]

90 Verse 4. *Kāmasūtra* (Banaras), p. 260.

91 The reading *sapta-shashṭi-satān-īha* stating the period of Ābhīra rule, which occurs in MS. of the *Vāyupurāṇa* (*DKA,* 46), is probably a mistake for *sapta-shashṭi-śatañch-cha* meaning 167 years. For, a similar expression see *pañcha-varsha-śatān-īha* which Pargiter takes as 'probably meaning 105 years' (*Ibid.,* 72. n. 15).

92 A different view is expressed in Vol. II, 332 (Ed.).

93 D. C. Sircar refers these dates to the Gupta Era on the ground that the title *Mahārāja* applied to these kings came to signify a feudatory prince first in the time of the Guptas (*IHQ,* XXII, 64 ff.). But the argument is not convincing. Apart from these doubtful cases we have no dates of the Gupta Era from any parts of Northern Mahārāshṭra. Besides, it is doubtful if the Guptas had penetrated to Khandesh as early as G. 67 (A.D. 386-87). On the other hand, the Ābhīra era continued to be used in the Nasik and Khandesh districts down to the eighth century A.D. For other arguments, see *ABORI,* XXV, 169 ff.; *IHQ,* XXIII, 156 ff.

Mahārāja Svāmidāsa, *Mahārāja* Bhuluṇḍa, and *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa, who described themselves as 'meditating on the feet of the Great Lord', and were, therefore, feudatories of some paramount power. Their grants are dated in the years 67, 107 and 117, respectively. These dates probably refer to the so-called Kalachuri-Chedi era founded by the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena.[94] It would, therefore, seem that the paramount power to which these princes owed allegiance was that of the Ābhīras. These grants thus indicate that Ābhīra rule lasted much longer than 67 years, which is the period assigned to them in many of the Purāṇas.

These princes issued their grants from Valkha, which appears to have been their capital. It is probably identical with modern Vāghlī near Chalisgaon in the Khandesh district. There was another and collateral branch of the same family ruling somewhere else in Khandesh, which also must have at first acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ābhīras. More than ten generations of this latter family are known from a fragmentary inscription in Cave XVII at Ajaṇṭā.[95] Some of the later princes seem to have submitted to the Vākāṭakas. The last of them, whose name is unfortunately lost, was a son of Kṛishṇarāja. Being overwhelmed with sorrow at the premature death of his younger brother, this prince began to lead a pious life. He got excavated the magnificent Ajaṇṭā Cave XVII, which has now more paintings than any other single cave at Ajaṇṭā. This work was done while Harisheṇa, 'the moon among princes', was protecting the earth. This ruler of Ṛishīka was, therefore, probably a feudatory of Harisheṇa. When exactly these rulers transferred their allegiance from the Ābhīras to the Vākāṭakas is not known. Perhaps they did so after the fall of the Ābhīras at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.

Another feudatory of the Ābhīras was probably the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Śaka Śrīdhara-varman, whose stone inscription recording the excavation of a well has been found at Kānākherā, near Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh. The inscription was put up in the thirteenth year, evidently of the reign of Śrīdhara-varman himself. The record contains another date at the end which has been variously read and interpreted.[96] The correct reading seems to be the year 102 which, being referred to the Ābhīra era, becomes equivalent to A.D. 351-52. Another

94 *CII*, IV, xxii ff.

95 *Ibid.*, V, 120 ff.

96 R. D. Banerji read the date as 201, which he referred to the Śaka era and took as equivalent to AD 279. N. G. Majumdar, on the other hand, proposed to read it as 241 and, referring it to the same era, took it as equivalent to A.D. 319. For the reading and interpretation proposed here, see *CII*, IV, 14 ff.

inscription of Śrīdhara-varman has recently come to light at Eraṇ in the Saugar district of Madhya Pradesh.[97] In this record Śrīdhara-varman has discarded his previous military title and calls himself *Rājan* and *Mahākshatrapa*. He has also omitted therein all reference to the Ābhīra era. This shows that he had declared independence at the time of this record which is dated in his twenty-seventh regnal year.

III. THE SAKAS OF MĀHISHAKA

Another family which rose to power in the Deccan after the downfall of the Sātavāhanas belonged to the Saka race. Its progenitor was the Saka king Māna, whose copper and lead coins have recently been discovered in the Andhra State.[98] The coins found at Kondapur have on the obverse a large *svastika* in the centre surrounded by the legend which describes Saka Māṇa as *Mahāsenāpati* and son of Bharadvāja. The reverse of these coins has the device of the thunderbolt and an arrow pointing downward, which was the distinctive badge of the Kshaharātas. The family of Saka Māna was evidently connected with the Kshaharāta family of Bhūmaka and Nahapāna. It would seem, therefore, that after the overthrow of Nahapāna by Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, some Sakas moved to the south where, in course of time, they rehabilitated themselves and attained the status of feudatories who could issue their own coinage. They may have taken part in the overthrow of the last Sātavāhana king Pulumāvi IV in the third century A.D.

Some other coins of Saka Māna found at Hyderabad are imitated from the coins of the Sātavāhanas. They have the figure of the elephant with the trunk raised on the obverse and the Ujjayinī symbol on the reverse.[99] The *svastika* is not completely discarded but appears in a very small size on both the sides. The legend describes Māna as Saka and *Rājan* and as *Mahisha,* i.e. the ruler of the Mahisha dynasty. This dynastic name seems to have been derived from the country of Māhishaka. There are several references to this country in the *Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata* and Purāṇas which indicate that it was situated in the South; for it is mentioned with such southern countries as Vidarbha, Ṛishīka, Kuntala, Karṇāṭaka, Draviḍa and Kaliṅga.[100] From the provenance of the coins which were discovered in the excavations at Kondapur and Maski in the Andhra

97 *CII,* IV, 605 ff.
98 *SI,* III, 56 ff.
99 *Loc. cit.*
100 *SI,* III, 60 ff.

State, it would appear that Māhishaka was the name of the southern part of that State and the adjoining Kannaḍa districts of the Mysore State.

These coins show that Śaka Māna, who had previously the feudatory title *Mahāsenāpati*, declared his independence and assumed the title of *Rājan* after the overthrow of the Sātavāhanas. He had evidently a fairly extensive dominion; for he is one of the few kings of the historical period to be named in the Purāṇas.[101] He was evidently the founder of a dynasty that continued to flourish for some generations in the Deccan.

The coins of two successors of Māna have been discovered in the Andhra State. The legend on one of them discovered in the excavations at Maski is fragmentary.[102] The royal name on it ended in *yasa* (Sanskrit, *yaśas*). The other successor was Sivala.[103] The Purāṇas say that among the successors of the Andhras (i.e. the Sātavāhanas) there were 18 Śaka kings who ruled for three hundred and eighty years. These Śaka rulers probably belonged to the dynasty founded by Māna. Pargiter takes the Puranic statement about the duration of their rule to signify 183 years.[104] If this is correct, the rule of these Śaka kings may have come to an end in A.D. 433, since they had risen to power in *c.* A.D. 250.

Like their ancestor Nahapāna, these Śaka rulers were probably using the Śaka era in dating their records. Unfortunately, no records of their age have yet been discovered; but we know that the Śaka era was current in the Kannaḍa country after their downfall. It was used by their successors the Chālukyas of Bādāmī and spread from there to Mahārāshṭra and Andhra with the extension of Chālukyan power.[105]

IV. THE TRAIKŪṬAKAS

The earliest mention of this royal family occurs in the Chandravalli inscription[106] of Mayūraśarman, which, on palaeographic grounds, may be referred to the fourth century A.D. This record mentions the Traikūṭakas separately from the Ābhīras, which indicates that the royal families, though contemporary, were not identical. The Trai-

101 *DKA*, 51. The Purāṇas give the name as *Sakyamāna*, which is plainly a mistake for *Saka-Māna*.

102 *SI*, III, 72 ff.

103 *Ibid.*, III, 74 ff.

104 *DKA*, Introduction, xxiv ff. Pargiter took the statement in the Purāṇas *śatāni trīṇy-aśītiñ-cha* to mean 183 years.

105 For the spread of the Śaka era in South India, see *SI*, II, 95 ff.

106 *MAR*, (1929), 50 ff. Some scholars, however, doubt the genuineness of this record (*NHIP*, VI, 238). Cf. also Ch. XIV, Sect. II.

kūṭakas appear to have been at first feudatories of the Ābhīras whose era they used in dating their records. They derived their name from Trikūṭa, doubtless the range of hills which borders the Nasik district on the west.[107] This district was, therefore, the home province of the Traikūṭakas.

The early history of the Traikūṭakas is shrouded in obscurity. As stated above, they may have been at first feudatories of the Ābhīras. Kālidāsa, who flourished in *c.* A.D. 400, probably knew of the Traikūṭakas; for he mentions Trikūṭa, situated in Aparānta or North Koṅkaṇ, in the description of Raghu's *digvijaya.*[108] The Traikūṭakas seem to have risen into prominence on the downfall of the Ābhīras in *c.* A.D. 417. The names of only five princes of this family are known from copper-plate grants and coins. The first of these was Indra-datta, who flourished in *c.* A.D. 415-40 and therefore may have been instrumental in shattering the power of the Ābhīras. He is known only from the coins of his son Dahrasena, which mention his title *Mahārāja.*

The second king *Mahārāja* Dahrasena is known from a copper-plate grant (No. 40) dated A.D. 455 as well as from silver coins which have been found over a wide territory, from Daman in the north to Sātārā in the south, and from Bombay in the west to Nasik in the east.[109] His kingdom seems, therefore, to have comprised Gujarat, Koṅkaṇ and some districts of Northern Mahārāshṭra such as Poona and Nasik. Traikūṭaka coins are not known to have been found in Khandesh, which may have become independent after the downfall of the Ābhīras. Dahrasena was a devout worshipper of Vishṇu. To proclaim his independence he performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. He seems to have ruled in the period A.D. 440-65.

Vyāghrasena, the son and successor of Dahrasena, is known from a copper-plate grant and coins. He assumed the title *Mahārāja* and, like his father, was a devout worshipper of Vishṇu. His Surat grant (No. 41) is dated K. 241 (A.D. 490-91). He was thus a contemporary of Harisheṇa, who, in an Ajaṇṭā cave inscription, is credited with the conquest of Trikūṭa. We have next a copper plate (No. 42), dated K. 245 (*c.* A.D. 494), discovered in the Kaṇheri Stūpa, which mentions the victorious reign of the Traikūṭakas, but names no prince. It may have belonged to the reign of Madhyamasena, the successor of Vyāghrasena, whose Matavan plates (No. 43), dated K. 256 (*c.* A.D. 505), have recently come to light. They were issued from Aniruddhapura, which was probably the king's capital.[109a] He was followed by

107 *CII*, IV, 149.
108 *Raghuvaṁśa*, IV, 58-59.
109 *CII*, Introduction, clxxix ff.
109a *Itihāsa aṇi Saṁskṛiti* (Marathi) (*IS*), XXII, 5.

Vikramasena whose copper-plate grant (No. 44), dated K. 284 (*c.* A.D. 533), also has recently been discovered in North Koṅkaṇ, [109b] He is so far the last known king of the Traikūṭaka family.

The Traikūṭakas had probably to submit to the Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhava-varman I, who extended his power to Western Mahārāshṭra in the beginning of the sixth century A.D. His copper-plate grant has been found at Khānāpur in the Sātārā district. His grandson, who succeeded him in the west, describes himself as the lord of Trikūṭa and Malaya mountains.[110] The Traikūṭakas seem to have been reduced to a feudatory rank during this period. Later, Kṛishṇarāja, the Kalachuri king of Māhishmatī, overthrew them and incorporated their kingdom in his dominion. He placed the Mauryas in charge of North Koṅkaṇ.

The Traikūṭaka kingdom, at its largest extent, appears to have spread from the Kīm in the north to the Kṛishṇā in the south, and to have comprised South Gujarat, North Koṅkaṇ, Nāsik and Poona districts and parts of the Sātārā district. Both Buddhism and Hinduism continued to flourish side by side under the rule of the Traikūṭakas. They maintained a powerful fleet for the protection of their maritime provinces. During their time Trikūṭa seems to have become famous as an emporium of salt. The earliest Traikūṭaka capital may have been Nasik, but during the reign of Vyāghrasena, the seat of government seems to have been shifted to Aniruddhapura. This town has not yet been identified, but may have been situated in the Surat district.

V. THE EARLY RĀSHṬRAKŪṬAS OF MĀNAPURA

The southern neighbours of the Traikūṭakas were the Rāshṭrakūṭas who rose into prominence during the last quarter of the fourth century A.D. Their original home was Laṭṭalūra, modern Lātūr in the Osmanabad district of Mahārāshṭra. As stated before, the country to the south of the Godāvarī was probably under the rule of a younger son of the Vākāṭaka *Samrāṭ* Pravarasena I. Vākāṭaka rule in this area seems to have been shortlived; for in the last quarter of the fourth century A.D. it was swept away by Mānāṅka, the founder of the early Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty. This daring prince wrested Kuntala from the Vākāṭakas and established himself at the newly founded city of

109b These plates (No. 44) are rather intriguing. Like those of Madhyamasena, they were issued from Aniruddhapura. Their wording is exactly like that of Surat plates (No. 41) of Traikūṭaka Vyāghrasena. The name of Vikramasena ends in *sena* like those of other Traikūṭaka kings, but, strange as it may seem, the royal family is named *Kaṭachchurīṇām* in place of *Traikūṭakānām* as in other records. However, in view of other points of similarity, I have taken Vikramasena to be a Traikūṭaka king.

110 See below, sec. X.

Mānapura, modern Māṇ in the Sātārā district. In the Pāṇḍaraṅgapallī grant[111] (No. 46) of his grandson Avidheya he is called the lord of the Kuntala country and is said to have harassed the kingdoms of Aśmaka and Vidarbha. We have no information about the contemporary ruler of the Aśmaka country, which comprised the territory along the bank of the Godāvarī, but the ruler of Vidarbha must have been Vindhyasena of the Vatsagulma branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, whose kingdom was conterminous with that of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. In an Ajaṇṭā inscription (No. 25) this Vindhyasena also is said to have defeated the king of Kuntala. The war seems, therefore, to have continued for some time and did not apparently end in any decisive victory.

Mānāṅka was succeeded by his son Devarāja in *c.* A.D. 400. This prince is compared to Indra in several records of the dynasty, and, like the lord of gods, he seems to have been of an easy-going nature. During his reign the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom came into the orbit of Gupta influence. The ambitious Gupta king Chandra-gupta II was gradually extending his power to the south. As stated before, he had probably deputed some trusted statesmen and officers to Vidarbha to help his daughter, the dowager queen Prabhāvatī-guptā, in governing her kingdom on behalf of her son Divākarasena, and one of these may have been the great Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa. Tradition says that the poet was asked by his royal patron to proceed to the court of the king of Kuntala and report the state of affairs there. From a passage cited by Kshemendra from the *Kuntaleśvaradautya*[112] of Kālidāsa, we learn that the poet was at first received with scant courtesy at the Kuntala court, but he soon ingratiated himself with the king and stayed in Kuntala for some time. When he returned to Ujjayinī, he reported to his patron that the king of Kuntala was spending his days in enjoyment, leaving the task of governing the

111 These plates describe Mānāṅka as *Kuntalānām praśāsitā*. D. C. Sircar takes this expression to mean that Mānāṅka was 'the chastizer of the Kuntalas'! Again, he places Kuntala proper in the heart of the Kanarese country with Vanavāsī (modern Baṇavāsī in the North Kanara district) as its capital. According to him, Kuntala came to signify the Southern Maratha country only in later times with the extension of the Kanarese empire (*NHIP*, VI, 88, n. 1; *IHQ*, XXII, 232; XXIII, 65 ff.). This is far from convincing. The most natural interpretation of the expression cited above would be that Mānāṅka was the ruler of the Kuntala country. As for the original limits of Kuntala, several literary and epigraphical references show that it included the upper and central valley of the Kṛishṇā (*EI*, XII, 153). Karhad, in Sātārā district, was included in Kuntala. *ARIE* (1953-54), No. 189. On the other hand, Vanavāsī is found mentioned separately from Kuntala in early works. For further discussion of this question, see *SI*, II, 155 ff.

112 According to Kshemendra's account, Kālidāsa had to sit on the ground when he was first introduced in the Kuntala court, and in a spirited reply he justified his choice of the seat. *Auchityavichāracharchā* (*NSP*), 139 ff.

kingdom to the Gupta king, to which, we are told, the latter readily agreed. Perhaps the king of Kuntala was, like the Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II, related to Chandra-gupta II. He was probably identical with the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Devarāja (*c.* A.D. 400-25).[113]

The patronage which Chandra-gupta II extended to both the Vākāṭakas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas seems to have healed up old sores, and the two families soon became united by a matrimonial alliance. The Vākāṭaka prince Narendrasena married the Kuntala princess Ajjhitabhaṭṭārikā,[114] who may have been the grand-daughter of Devarāja.

Devarāja had three sons, Vibhurāja *alias* Mānarāja,[115] Avidheya and Bhavishya. All the three brothers ascended the throne and are said to have vanquished many kings, but we have no definite knowledge of the events of their reigns. Bhavishya was followed by his son Abhimanyu (*c.* A.D. 470-90), who was probably a contemporary of the mighty Vākāṭaka king Harishena. During his reign the old hostilities between the two royal families were revived. In the war which ensued, the Vākāṭaka king emerged victorious as stated in an Ajaṇṭā inscription, and Abhimanyu was reduced to a state of vassalage. Abhimanyu's son was probably the Kuntala king who conspired with other feudatories and treacherously attacked the voluptuous emperor of Vidarbha as stated in a narrative in the *Daśakumāracharita*.[116]

The Rāshṭrakūṭa family did not end with Abhimanyu's successor. A copper-plate inscription,[117] discovered at Gokak in the Belgaon district, mentions the Rāshṭrakūṭa *Mahārāja* Dejja, who may have belonged to this very family. The record was issued when 845 years of the Āguptayika kings had expired. This date is shown to correspond to A.D. 532-33. Dejjamahārāja may, therefore, have been one of the successors of Abhimanyu.

About this time the Vishṇukuṇḍin king Mādhava-varman I seems to have extended his sway to Southern Mahārāshṭra.[118] The Rāshṭra-

113 Two other identifications of this Kuntaleśa which were previously proposed do not appear plausible after the discovery of this early Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom in the upper Krishṇā valley. Heras identified this Kuntaleśa with the early Kadamba king Kākustha-varman (*JBORS*, XII, pt. iv), but the latter flourished somewhat later than Chandra-gupta II (See *SSD*, 233; *IHQ*, IX, 197). Krishnaswami Aiyangar and Altekar identified him with the Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II (*NHIP*, VI, 110). This view also is untenable, because this Vākāṭaka king never ruled over Kuntala. The Vākāṭakas of the main branch had sometimes matrimonial connection with the kings of Kuntala and were, therefore, plainly different from them (*EI*, XXXVII, 16 ff.).

114 *CII*, V, 81.

115 *EI*, XXIX, 17 ff.

116 *SI*, I, 1968, p. 182 ff.

117 *EI*, XXI, 289.

118 *Ibid.*, XXVII, 312 ff.

kūṭa kings ruling in Kuntala may have been obliged to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Vishṇukuṇḍins for some time. The latter were, however, soon driven out of Southern Mahārāshṭra, where the Rāshṭrakūṭas continued to flourish till the rise of the Early Chālukyas. Their subsequent history will be narrated in a later chapter.

VI. THE KINGS OF DAKSHIṆA KOSALA

1. *The Dynasty of Śūra*

We have little information about the early history of Dakshiṇa Kosala comprising the districts of Durg, Raipur, Bilaspur and Sambalpur, which bordered Vidarbha on the east. This country may have been included in the Śātavāhana empire; for a coin[119] of Āpīḻaka, who figures in the Purāṇas as the eighth king of the dynasty, has been found at Bālpur on the bank of the Mahānadī. The Śātavāhana yoke must have been very light; for we find no mention of their suzerainty in two early records found in Chhattisgarh. One of these is inscribed on a rock at Gunji in the former Sakti State and refers itself to the reign of king Kumāravara-datta.[120] It records some *mahādānas* of a thousand cows each, made by certain ministers of the king at the Ṛishabha-tīrtha, which, from ancient times, has been famous for its sanctity.[121] This inscription may be referred to the beginning of the Christian era on palaeographic grounds. Another inscription, inscribed in slightly later characters on a *yūpa* or sacrificial post, was discovered at Kirāri in the Bilaspur district.[122] It mentioned some king and his ministers, but owing to the unfortunate peeling off of the surface of the wooden post, most of the names have been lost.

According to the Purāṇas, a dynasty of nine powerful kings called Meghas flourished in Kosala, i.e. Southern Kosala or Chhattisgarh. They may be identical with the Maghas, who seem to have ruled from Bandhogarh. Their history has been given elsewhere.

The next mention of Kosala occurs in the Allahabad pillar inscription in connection with the southern conquests of Samudra-gupta. Like several other kings of the south, Mahendra, the ruler of Kosala, was defeated and taken captive, but was graciously reinstated by the Gupta Emperor. The descendants of Mahendra may have continued to rule in Chhattisgarh for some generations as feudatories of the

119 *JRASB* (Num. Suppl.), 93 ff.

120 *EI*, XXVII, 48 ff.

121 This *tīrtha* is mentioned in the Āraṇyakaparvan of the *Mahābhārata* (*ABORI*), 83, 10.

122 *EI*, XVIII, 152 ff.

Guptas, but we have no records of their reigns except perhaps the Āraṅg plate dated G. 182 (A.D. 501-2).[123]

The Āraṅg plate mentions the following six generations of rulers, viz Śūra, Dayita(varman) I, Bibhīshaṇa, Bhīmasena I, Dayitavarman II, and Bhīmasena II. Śūra, the founder of the dynasty, may have flourished in the period A.D. 350-75. He may, therefore, have been the successor of the afore-mentioned Mahendra. He is probably identical with Sūryaghosha,[124] who, in a stone inscription at Āraṅg, is said to have built a temple of Sugata or Buddha, being convinced of the transitoriness of the world at the premature death of his son who had fallen from the top of his palace.[125]

Śūra (or Sūryaghosha) and some of his successors may have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas, an indication of which is furnished by the introduction of the Gupta Era in Chhattisgarh. But when the power of the Guptas declined in the second half of the fifth century A.D., they seems to have transferred their allegiance to the Vākāṭakas; for the king of Kosala is mentioned among the rulers who honoured the imperial commands of the Vākāṭaka Narendrasena (A.D. 450-65). This king was probably Bhīmasena I. Two generations later, the Vākāṭaka Emperor Harisheṇa, who had incorporated Northern Vidarbha in his own dominion after the death of Pṛithivīsheṇa II, invaded Kosala, probably in the course of his campaign against Kaliṅga and Andhra. The contemporary ruler, who was probably Bhīmasena II, had to submit and to pay tribute to the victorious Emperor. He continued, however, to use the Gupta Era in his records, which his suzerain may not have objected to as in the case of the Uchchakalpa kings.

The capital of these kings was probably Śrīpura, about 20 miles north-east of Āraṅg, in the Raipur district. It still shows considerable ruins of ancient temples and contains several inscriptions.

2. *The Kings of Śarabhapura*

Soon after the issue of the Āraṅg plate, Bhīmasena II seems to have been overthrown by Jayarāja of the Śarabhapura dynasty. The founder of this family which ruled in South Kosala for some generations was Śarabha. His date is approximately settled by the mention

123 This date was read as G. 282 by Hiralal (*EI*, IX, 345). This reading has been supported by D. C. Sircar (*IHQ*, XXII, 65). The palaeographic evidence as well as the form of the first symbol of the date shows, however, that the correct reading of the date is as given above. For further discussion, see *BDCRI*, VIII, 47 ff.

124 *Sura* in Sanskrit means also the Sun.

125 *JRAS*, 1960, p. 624 ff. Harirāja of the Sūra-vaṁśa, whose copper-plates have been found in Banaras, may have been a later member of this royal family. *PAIOC*, 1943-44, pp. 590 ff.

of his daughter's son Goparāja in the Eraṇ stone pillar inscription of Bhānu-gupta, dated G. 191 (A.D. 510-11). Śarabha may have flourished about A.D. 460. He founded the city of Śarabhapura which he made his capital. This city has not been definitely located, but it may be identical with Śarabhgarh in the former Gangapur State in Orissa. Śarabha was succeeded by his son Narendra (*c.* A.D. 470-90), who is mentioned in two recently discovered grants—one at Pipardulā in the former State of Sarangarh and the other at Kurud in the Raipur district.

Prasannamātra, who is the next known king, must have flourished not long after Narendra and may have been his immediate successor. He is known from his rare silver coins as well as from the records of his successors. He founded the city of Prasannapura, which has not yet been located. He had two sons, Jayarāja and Mānamātra *alias* Durgarāja. The former, who succeeded him, extended his kingdom westwards and overthrew Bhīmasena II of Śrīpura. It seems that there was a division of the kingdom after his death. His son Pravara I, known from the Mallar plates of his brother Vyāghrarāja, ruled from Prasannapura, while his brother Mānamātra and nephew Sudevarāja had their capital at Śarabhapura. Several land-grants of Sudevarāja have been found in the Raipur district and the former State of Sarangarh. He seems to have shifted his capital later to Śrīpura on the Mahānadī. His brother Pravararāja II is the last-known member of this family. He seems to have been supplanted in *c.* A.D. 530 by Indrabala II, who had been serving his brother as *Mahāsāmanta* and *Sarvādhikārādhikṛita.* This Indrabala founded the Somavaṁśī dynasty in Dakshiṇa Kosala, to whose history we shall now turn.

3. *The Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs or Somavaṁśīs of Mekala and Kosala*

The Somavaṁśīs of Kosala were also known as Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs; but there was an earlier Pāṇḍuvaṁśī family ruling in the neighbouring country of Mekala (or Mekalā), i.e. the region near the Amarkantak hills. A copper-plate grant (No. 63) of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs of Mekala was found at Bamhani in the Sohagpur tahsil of Baghelkhand. It gives the names of four members of the family, viz Jayabala, his son Vatsarāja, his son *Mahārāja* Nāgabala, and his son *Mahārāja* Bharata or Bharatabala, otherwise called Indra. While the first two kings have not been called *Mahārāja* and were apparently petty chiefs, Nāgabala and Bharatabala have, besides the royal title, the epithets *paramamāheśvara, paramabrahmaṇya,* and *parama-devatādhidaivata-viśesha.* Lokaprakāśā, queen of Bharatabala, is described as a princess of Kosala. The suggestion that she was born in the family of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs of South Kosala is improbable in view of the late date

of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśī occupation of that country. The palaeography of the Bamhani record suggests that the afore-mentioned rulers of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśa in Mekala ruled in the fifth century, when South Kosala was under other kings. She may have been the daughter of Bibhīshaṇa of the Śūra dynasty mentioned above (p. 156).

Bharatabala *alias* Indra (or Indrabala I), who issued the Bamhani plates, was probably a feudatory of the Vākāṭaka Narendrasena. It is possible that he was related to the Pāṇḍuvaṁśī or Somavaṁśī kings who ruled in South Kosala with Śrīpura as their capital in the sixth century A.D. The connecting links between the two families are not yet definitely known, but the following is suggested as a possible hypothesis.

Indrabala (I) of Mekala was probably succeeded by Udayana, who may have been his son, in *c.* A.D. 490.[126] He is named in several records of his descendants. He was a valiant and ambitious prince, who, taking advantage of the tottering condition of the Gupta Empire, made bold incursions in the north, and for a time succeeded in extending his sway as far as Kālañjara, the famous fort in the Bāndā district, where he erected a temple of Bhadreśvara. He was succeeded by his son Indrabala (II) in *c.* A.D. 515. Shortly after, the latter seems to have been ousted from Mekala by the Parivrājaka *Mahārāja* Hastin, who spread his power to the Ḍāhala country before A.D. 517. Indrabala then moved to South Kosala, where he ruled as *Mahāsāmanta* and *Sarvādhikārādhikṛita* under Sudevarāja. Occupying a position of power and vantage as he did, he must have found it easy to overthrow Sudevarāja's brother Pravararāja not long after his accession.

Indrabala II seems to have ruled as an independent king in Chhattisgarh for some time. He was probably the founder of the town Indrapura which is mentioned as the headquarters of a territorial division in a mutilated inscription at Kharod in the Bilaspur district. Indrabala's son Īśānadeva built the temple of Lakshmaṇeśvara (now Lakhṇesvara) at Kharod and endowed it with the gift of some villages. Īśānadeva's brother Nannadeva was ruling when the temple of Sugata (Buddha), originally erected by Sūryaghosha at Āraṅg, was repaired. Himself a devout worshipper of Śiva, he erected several temples dedicated to that god under the name of Nanneśvara.[127]

126 The relation of Udayana to Indrabala (I) of Mekala is not definitely known, but as the former's son bore the same name as the latter, and grandsons are usually named after their grandfather, it is conjectured that Udayana was the son of Indrabala (I).

127 The correct reading of the second half of the verse in ll. 4 and 5 of the Śirpur stone inscription edited by Kielhorn (*IA*, XVIII, 180) is probably as follows: *pūrnnaṁ Nanneśvar-ākhyair-yaś-chakar-orvvīṁ Śiv-ālayaiḥ.*

Nannadeva's son Tīvaradeva is known from three copper-plate grants—discovered at Bonda in the Raigarh district, Rājim in the Raipur district and Baloda in the former Phulzar zamindārī—all included in Chhattisgarh. All these grants are written in a florid style and, in their formal part, use an expression which occurs invariably in the grants of the kings of Śarabhapura.[128] This clearly indicates that the Somavaṁśīs were the successors and not the predecessors of the latter kings.

Tīvaradeva claims to have obtained the five *mahāśabdas* and to be the ruler of the entire Kosala country. In the Adhbhar plates of his son Nannarāja II he is described as the lord of Utkala and other *maṇḍalas* also. Unlike his predecessors, he was a devotee of Vishṇu.

Soon after his accession, Tīvaradeva seems to have suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Vishṇukuṇḍin emperor, Mādhavavarman I. The latter penetrated as far as Tīvaradeva's capital Śrīpura, which he occupied for some time.[129] Tīvaradeva's grants contain no clear indication of his acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the Vishṇukuṇḍins. Perhaps the reference to his acquisition of the five *mahāśabdas* in all his grants is an indication of his feudatory status. It is noteworthy that the expression is omitted in the grants of his successors.

Tīvaradeva was succeeded by his son Nannarāja II, who is described in the Adhbhar plates as the lord of the entire Kosala country. Like his father, he was a devotee of Vishṇu. As the Adhbhar plates are not dated, we do not know the period of his rule.

Tīvaradeva had a valiant younger brother named Chandra-gupta, who always fought in the vanguard of his battles. The latter's son Harsha-gupta succeeded his cousin Nannarāja in *c.* A.D. 580. He was a brave, religious-minded and liberal prince. He married Vāsaṭā, the daughter of king Sūrya-varman, who is described as born in the family of the Varmans 'great on account of their supremacy over Magadha'.[130] The identity of this Sūrya-varman has been a matter of controversy, but the probable view seems to be that he was identical with the homonymous Maukhari prince who rebuilt a temple of Śiva in A.D. 555, during the reign of his father Īśāna-varman.

Harsha-gupta sems to have died soon after his accession, leaving behind the boy prince Śiva-gupta, who succeeded him in *c.* A.D. 595. On account of his marvellous skill in archery even in his boyhood. Śiva-gupta was known by the second name of Bālārjuna.[131] This king had a long reign of nearly 60 years. His mother Vāsaṭā, who was a

128 *EI*, XXII, 17, n. 5.
129 See below, Sect. X.
130 *EI*, XI, 192 ff.
131 *IA*, XVIII, 180 ff.

religious-minded lady, seems to have greatly influenced him. She led a life of piety, observing fasts and austerities, but she took active interest in the affairs of the State. She is said to have brought back the Kṛita-yuga on earth by checking all evil. Harsha-gupta, her husband, was, like his uncle Tīvaradeva, a devotee of Vishṇu. Vāsaṭā shared his religious faith and caused a lofty brick-temple of Vishṇu to be erected at the capital of Śrīpura.

Śiva-gupta was himself a devotee of Śiva, but following the noble tradition of Indian kings, he held the scales even in the case of all religions and creeds of his realm. He made grants both to the Buddhist *Sanghas* and Hindu gods.[132]

Śiva-gupta ruled from *c.* A.D. 595 to 655.[133] He was therefore the king of Kosala who had to submit to the mighty Pulakeśin II. It was probably during his reign that South Kosala was visited by Hiuen Tsang, who has left us an interesting account of the king and the country. 'This country', says the Chinese pilgrim, 'was more than 6,000 *li* in circuit, was surrounded by mountains and was a succession of woods and marshes, its capital being above 40 *li* in circuit. The soil of the country was rich and fertile, the people were prosperous, tall of stature, and black in colour, the king was a Kshatriya by birth, a Buddhist in religion, and of noted benevolence.'[134] The description fits the kingdom of Śiva-gupta very well. Śiva-gupta was undoubtedly a Kshatriya as the family in which he was born traced its descent from Pāṇḍu, the father of the epic heroes, Pāṇḍavas. He was not a Buddhist as stated by Hiuen Tsang, but his Mallur plates show that he liberally patronized Buddhism, which may have misled the Chinese traveller into thinking that he was a Buddhist by persuasion. His capital Śrīpura answers to the bearings and description of the capital of Kosala given by Hiuen Tsang.[135]

The history of South Kosala after the death of Śiva-gupta is enveloped in obscurity. Śiva-gupta had a brother named Raṇakesarin,[136] but whether he or some one else succeeded Śiva-gupta is not known. Perhaps soon after Śiva-gupta's death, the kingdom was invaded by the Nalas, who ruled over the Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining territory. A stone inscription of the dynasty discovered at Rājim, which on palaeographic grounds can be referred to the eighth century A.D., mentions three Nala kings. The Nalas seem,

132 *EI*, XXIII, 120; *PAIOC* (Banaras), XII, 595.

133 For the date of the commencement of his reign, see *EI*, XXXV, 63.

134 Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, II, 200.

135 The capital of South Kosala, described by Hiuen Tsang, has been variously located at Wairāgarh, Chāndā and Bhāndak. For the view stated here, see *EI*, XXIII, 118 ff.

136 He is mentioned in the Sirpur stone inscription of Vāsaṭā. *EI*, XI, 191.

therefore, to have ousted the Somavaṁśīs from Chhattisgarh and driven them to the east. The rule of the Somavaṁśīs seems thus to have lasted in Chhattisgarh for about a hundred and twenty-five years (*c.* A.D. 530-655).

VII. THE NALAS OF PUSHKARI

The Purāṇas mention the dynasty of the Nalas ruling in Kosala i.e. South Kosala. According to the *Vishṇupurāṇa*,[137] as many as nine kings of this dynasty reigned. The location of their kingdom was, however, uncertain before the discovery of their stone inscriptions, copper plates and coins during the last forty years.

The earliest stone inscription (No. 80) of this dynasty has been discovered at Poḍāgarh in the Vizagapatam district of the Andhra State. Gold coins of three early kings have been found at Eḍengā in the adjoining Kondegaon *tahsil* of the Bastar district in Madhya Pradesh.[138] The south-eastern portion of Kosala, comprising the Bastar district and the adjoining territory, seems to have been their home province. This part of the country is even now covered with dense, almost impenetrable, forest. Vyāghrarāja of Mahākāntāra (Great Forest), whom Samudra-gupta subjugated after Mahendra of Dakshiṇa Kosala, probably belonged to the Nala dynasty.[139] He may have been ruling about A.D. 340. We have no knowledge of the subsequent history of this dynasty for about a hundred years, but from some gold coins discovered in the Bastar district we know of three early kings of this family, namely, Varāha, Bhavadatta and Arthapati. They seem to have flourished in this order. Nothing is known about Varāha, but his successor Bhavadatta signalized his regin by a daring incursion into the Vākāṭaka territory and advanced as far as Nandivardhana, the earlier capital of the main branch of the Vākāṭakas, which he occupied for some time. A copper-plate inscription (No. 78), recording a grant of land which Bhavadatta made during his pilgrimage at Prayāga, was issued from Nandivardhana bv his son Arthapati.[140] The Vākāṭakas also admit this disaster to their arms at the close of Narendrasena's reign. The latter's son Pṛithivīshena II, however, soon retrieved the situation. He drove out the Nalas from Vidarbha. They then retreated to their former capital Pushkarī. A subsequent grant (No. 79) of Arthapati dated in the seventh regnal year is

137 *DKA*, 51, n. 23.

138 *JNSI*, I, 29 ff.; *SI*, III, 97 ff.

139 *CII*, III, 7.

140 The editor of the plates took Arthapati in ll. 21-22 as referring to Bhavadatta-varman himself, but the coins show that the two were different, *JNSI*, I, 33.

issued from the capital of Pushkarī.[141] Some time later Pṛithivīsheṇa II seems to have invaded the Nala kingdom and devastated the capital Pushkarī. Ultimately, Skanda-varman, another son of Bhavadatta, resettled the capital and restored the glory of the family as stated in the Poḍagarh inscription.[142]

The subsequent history of the Nalas can be briefly told here. After their crushing defeat by the Vākāṭakas, they seem to have confined themselves to their home province. They suffered another disastrous defeat at the hands of Kīrti-varman I some time in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. The Chālukya king is called 'the night of destruction to the Nalas, Mauryas and Kadambas'.[143] The Nalas were not, however, exterminated any more than the Mauryas or the Kadambas. Like the kings of Kosala and Kaliṅga, they must have submitted to Pulakeśin II also, but they found a favourable opportunity for the expansion of their power when the Chālukya kingdom was overrun by the Pallavas at the end of Pulakeśin's reign. They invaded the kingdom of the Somavaṁśīs, whom they drove to the east. A stone inscription[143a] of about the eighth century A.D., still existing at Rājim in the Raipur district, mentions three kings of the Nala dynasty, viz Pṛithvīrāja, Virūparāja, and Vilāsatuṅga. It records the erection, by Vilāsatuṅga, of a lofty temple of Vishṇu which is probably identical with that at Rajim now dedicated to Rājīvalochana.

The Nalas seem to have ruled in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts till the ninth century A.D. when they were ousted by a branch of the Kalachuris of Tripurī which established itself in Chhattisgarh.

VIII. THE ĀNANDAS

The Bṛihatphalāyanas, who succeeded the Ikshvākus in the lower Krishṇā valley, were overthrown by the Ānandas. The founder of this family was the king Kandara, who founded the town of Kandarapura and made it his capital. No record of this king has been discovered so far, but a much defaced inscription (No. 81) mentioning his daughter was found at Chezarla, west of Guntur. Only two other princes of this dynasty are known from their copper-plate grants, viz Attivarman (or Hasti-varman) who issued the Gorantlu plates (No. 82) and Dāmodara-varman who issued the Mattepad plates (No. 83). The

141 *EI*, XXVIII, 12 ff. Arthapati was not the grandson of Bhavadatta-varman as supposed by D. C. Sircar (*EI*, XXVIII, 13). The grant was made for the religious merit of his father (Bhavadatta), not his grandfather. See lines 21-24 of the grant. *Āryaka* in line 24 of the Riddhapur plates (*EI*, XIX, 163) means the father, not the grandfather.

142 *EI*, XXI, 153 ff.

143 *EI*, VI, 1 ff.

143a *Ibid.*, XXVI, 48 ff.

former performed the exceedingly costly *mahādāna* Hiraṇyagarbha several times. Dāmodara-varman, whose father is credited with a similar performance, may have been his son.[144] Both these kings claimed descent from the ancient sage Ānanda. Their grants are written in Sanskrit or a mixture of Sanskrit and Prakrit and in characters of about the fourth century A.D. The villages granted by them were situated in the Guntūr district. Attivarman was a devotee of Śiva, but his son Dāmodara-varman changed over to Buddhism. Kandarapura where these kings ruled is still unidentified.

The Ānandas probably flourished in the first half of the fourth century A.D. and seem to have been overthrown by their neighbours, the Śālaṅkāyanas when they extended their sway to the south of the Kṛishṇā.

IX. THE ŚĀLAṄKĀYANAS

In the Andhra country which lay between the lower courses of the Godāvarī and the Kṛishṇā, there flourished the ancient dynasty of the Śālaṅkāyanas. They seem to have held this territory as early as the second century A.D.; for Ptolemy, who flourished in *c.* A.D. 140, mentions Ṣālakenoi, usually identified with this royal family.[145] Śālaṅkāyana was an ancient sage, and as many as four *gotras* of this name with different *pravaras* are known The *gaṇapāṭha*, ascribed to Pāṇini, mentions *Śālaṅkāyanaka* as the country of the Śālaṅkāyanas,[146] which may have been situated in the north-west. The *Kāśika*, an ancient commentary on the *sūtras* of Pāṇini, probably knew of the Śalaṅkāyana kings; for in an illustration to Pāṇini's *sūtra* II.1.6 it states that the Śālaṅkāyanas conducted themselves as true Kshatriyas.[147]

Seven kings of this line are known. They all ruled from Veṅgī which some scholars identify with Benagouron mentioned by Ptolemy as an important town in the country of Śālekenoi.[148] The earliest of these rulers was Deva-varman, who may have flourished about A.D. 300. His grant is written in early characters and in the Prakrit language. He performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice and seems, therefore,

144 *SSD*, 59.

145 *PHAI*, 1938, p. 341. n. 1.

146 See the *rājanyādi gaṇa* referred to in Pāṇini. IV. 2. 53.

147 See *Kāśikā* on Pāṇini II. 1. 6., *sa-kshatraṁ Śālaṅkāyanānām*, which is explained to mean that the warlike spirit befitted the Śālaṅkāyanas. The illustration does not occur in the earlier grammatical work, the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali, and may have been suggested by some heroic deeds of the Śālaṅkāyanas in a period before the seventh century A.D. The illustration also shows that the Śālaṅkāyanas were regarded as Kshatriyas.

148 *SSD*, 71 ff.

to have ruled over a fairly extensive territory. The next known king is Hasti-varman I, who is mentioned in the copper-plate grants (Nos. 87 and 89) of his great-grandsons Skanda-varman and Nandi-varman II. He is probably identical with the homonymous ruler of Veṅgī who, together with some other rulers of the South, was defeated and afterwards reinstated by Samudra-gupta. Hasti-varman was a powerful ruler; for he is said to have obtained victory in several battles. Though he had to submit to the mighty Gupta emperor, he seems to have soon thrown off his yoke; for none of his descendants are known to have used the Gupta Era, which was one of the visible signs of Gupta supremacy.

Hasti-varman I was succeeded by his son Nandi-varman I whose grant written in Prakrit has been discovered at Kānukollu in the Kṛishṇā district (No. 85). He had two sons, Hasti-varman II and Chaṇḍa-varman. The former, who appears to have succeeded him, is known from his own Penugonda plates and the Kanukollu plates (second set) granted by his son Skanda-varman. In the former he is described as a hundred years old, which is understood by some scholars to be literally true. Like other similar expressions occurring in other grants, however, it indicates only a pious wish that he would be long-lived. He receives only conventional praise in the grant of Skanda-varman. The latter, who succeeded him, was a favourite of his grandfather Nandi-varman I as he is mentioned as *bālaka-mahārāja* in the grant (No. 85). Skanda-varman granted some land in the district of Kudrāhāra, which may be identical with Kuḍūrahāra mentioned in a grant of the Bṛihatphalāyana king Jaya-varman.[149] Skanda-varman seems, therefore, to have extended his power south of the Kṛishṇā and overthrown the Ānanda king who was ruling over that territory.[150]

Skanda-varman probably died childless as he appears to have been succeeded by his uncle Chaṇḍa-varman. This prince is said to have exacted submission from his feudatories, which seems to indicate that he had a fairly extensive kingdom. He was followed by Nandi-varman II, who also made a grant of land in the afore-mentioned *vishaya* of Kudrāhāra. He is described as the eldest son of his father,[151] but the names of his younger brothers are not known.

Nearly all the grants of these kings were issued from Veṅgī, which

149 *IA*, *V*, 176. The correct reading of the territorial division is Kudrāhāra as stated by Hultzsch. *EI*, IX, 58.

150 The inscriptions of Nandi-varman II and Skanda-varman record grants of land in the Kudrāhāra-vishaya, which was previously under the rule of the Ānanda kings.

151 *JAHRS*, I, 101.

was evidently their capital. They were devotees of the god Chitraratha. Some take this god to be identical with the Sun and others with Śiva. The seal of their copper-plate charters bears the figure of Nandī, which supports the latter view. Besides, Deva-varman calls himself *parama-māheśvara,* a fervent devotee of Maheśvara (Śiva). His descendant Nandi-varman II, however, is described as *parama-bhāgavata,* which indicates his devotion to Vishṇu, though he mentions his family deity Chitraratha in the beginning of his grant. It may be noted in this connection that he made his Pedda-Veṅgī grant (No. 90) in honour of Vishṇu, whom he describes as the lord of the three worlds.

All the grants of the Śālaṅkāyanas, so far discovered, are dated in regnal years which afford no clue to the period in which they flourished. But the contemporaneity of one of them, viz Hasti-varman I, with Samudra-gupta, indicates that they must have flourished in the period A.D. 300-500. Towards the close of the fifth century A.D. Harisheṇa, the mighty Vākāṭaka emperor, raided the Andhra country and defeated its ruler who was probably a Śālaṅkāyana. He seems to have deposed him and given the kingdom to the Vishṇukuṇḍin king *Mahārāja* Govinda-varman.[152] Śālaṅkāyanas thus disappear from the stage of history about A.D. 500.

X. THE VISHṆUKUṆḌINS

The founder of the Vishṇukuṇḍin dynasty was Vikramendra I.[153] He seems to have been ruling south of the Kṛishṇā, probably as a feudatory of the Śālaṅkāyanas; for even in the record of his grandson he is not given the title of *Mahārāja.* The family derived its name from the town and fort of Viṇhukoṇḍa in the Kṛishṇā district, about 50 miles south of the Kṛishṇā, which may have been its original capital. Vikramendra's son Govinda-varman I seems to have risen into prominence as he is the first king of this family who assumed the title *Mahārāja.* The real founder of Vishṇukuṇḍin power, however, was Govinda-varman's son Mādhava-varman I *alias* Janāśraya. He married a Vākāṭaka princess[154] who might have been a daughter or some near relative of Harisheṇa.

Mādhava-varman I is credited with the performance of as many

152 See below, Sect. X.

153 The Pulomburu plates (*JAHRS,* VI, 17 ff.) which mention this prince give his name as *Vikramahendra* which appears to be a mistake for *Vikramendra,* a name borne by two other kings of this dynasty. It is well known that in India grandsons are named after their grandfather. There was a third Vikramendra-varman in this line who was a grandson of the second prince of that name.

154 The Chikkullā plates (*EI,* IV, 193 ff.) state that his son Vikramendrā-varman's birth was graced by the two families Vishṇukuṇḍin and Vākāṭaka.

as eleven Aśvamedhas, a thousand Agnishṭomas as well as several other Vedic sacrifices such as Bahusuvarṇa, Puṇḍarīka, Purushamedha, Vājapeya, Rājasūya, Prājāpatya and others. He also performed the costly *mahādāna* Hiraṇyagarbha. The performance of so many Aśvamedhas indicates wide extension of his dominion. During his time he seems to have become the undisputed master of the Deccan. The political condition in the Deccan in the first half of the sixth century A.D. was also favourable for his phenomenal rise; for the Traikūṭakas and the Vākāṭakas were then passing into oblivion, while the Kalachuris and the Early Chālukyas had not yet appeared on the horizon. Mādhava-varman may have reinstated Harisheṇa's grandson on the throne of Vidarbha for some time as suggested in the *Daśakumāracharita*.[155] Later, he may have occupied the country himself. He seems to have soon extended his suzerainty to Western Mahārāshṭra and possibly to Karṇāṭaka also. This is indicated by the finds of Vishṇukuṇḍin coins in the excavations at Paunār in the Wardhā district and at Nevāsā in the Ahmadnagar district.[156] Mādhava-varman's own rule in Southern Mahārāshṭra is indicated by his grant of the village Reṭṭuraka, modern Reṭare-budruk, in the Sātārā district.[157] His attempt to penetrate farther to the South may have met with strong opposition from the powerful Chālukya king Pulakeśin I, who is known to have performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice before Śaka 465 (A.D. 543).[158]

Mādhava-varman's invasion of South Kosala can be inferred from the description in his grants (Nos. 87 and 88). He is said to have sported in company, or delighted the hearts, of beautiful ladies in the city of Trivara.[159] This Trivara is probably identical with Tīvaradeva of the Somavaṁśī dynasty, who was ruling from Śrīpura in Dakshiṇa Kosala.

Mādhava-varman seems also to have invaded the newly founded kingdom of the Eastern Gaṅgas, north of the Godāvarī; for he made

155 *SI*, I. 1938, pp. 182 ff. See Appendix I.

156 *Paunār Excavations* (Nagpur University), 13. S. B. Deo pointed out that they were also found in the excavations at Nevāsā, but were wrongly ascribed to the *Pallavas*, *Ibid.*, 13, n. 4.

157 *EI*, XXVII, 513 ff. The first plate of this grant which may have contained the name and description of the royal family is lost, but the fragmentary description of the sacrifices performed by Mādhava-varman is, so far as it goes, in keeping with the description of the sacrifices of Madhava-varman I and, on palaeographic grounds, the record can be referred to the fifth or sixth century A.D. In view of the statement in the Ipur plates and the finds of Vishṇukuṇḍin coins at Nevāsā it appears very probable that the grant was made by Mādhava-varman I.

158 *EI*, XXII, 4.

159 *Ibid.*, XXII, 19; *SI*, I, 1968, pp. 237 ff.

one of the grants after he had crossed the Godāvarī for conquering the eastern region.[160]

Mādhava-varman suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Maukhari king Īśāna-varman when the latter invaded Andhra. He opposed him with thousands of rutting elephants.[161] He was, however, defeated and had probably to agree to pay tribute, but he soon threw off the yoke of the distant Maukhari emperor.

Mādhava-varman I had a long reign of about 50 years. He seems to have ruled from *c.* A.D. 475 to 525. He had three sons, Deva-varman, Mañchyaṇṇa-bhaṭṭāraka and Vikramendra-varman, all of whom seem to have predeceased him. After his death his extensive kingdom was divided between his grandsons. Mādhava-varman II, the son of Deva-varman, is said to have ruled over the western provinces from Trikūṭa near Nāsik to Malaya in Karṇāṭaka.[162] But he was soon dispossessed of this territory; for the Kalachuris occupied Northern Mahārāshṭra and Vidarbha, the Rāshṭrakūṭas regained power in Southern Mahārāshṭra,[163] while the Chālukyas extended their sway over Karṇāṭaka and even raided distant countries.[164] The Vishṇukuṇḍin dominion came, therefore, again to be confined to the Andhra country.

Indra-varman *alias* Indrabhaṭṭāraka-varman,[165] the son of Vikramendra-varman, who succeeded his grandfather in the east, continued his hostilities with the Eastern Gaṅgas. The Godāvarī plates of Pṛithivīmūla state that his suzerain, the *Adhirāja* Indra, who probably belonged to the Eastern Gaṅga dynasty, fought in company with other chiefs who had united to overthrow a certain Indrabhaṭṭāraka.[166] The latter's identity has been a matter of keen controversy, but the probable view seems to be that he is identical with the homonymous Vishṇukuṇḍin king who was the grandson and successor of Mādhava-varman I. This Indra-varman had a long reign of about 30 years and may be referred to A.D. 525-55. His adversary may have been Indra-

160 *JAHRS*, VI, 17 ff.

161 *EI*, XIV, 117.

162 There is no doubt a hill named Trikūṭa in the Guntūr district in Andhra, but Malaya is not so well known in that part of the country. Besides, there is no point in describing a king as the lord of Trikūṭa and Malaya unless these hills were well known. On the other hand, Trikūṭa and Malaya are famous hills in the western part of South India.

163 Govinda who invaded the country to the south of the Bhīmā at the time of Pulakeśin's accession probably belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty. *EI*, XXXVII, 18.

164 The Chālukya king Kīrti-varman I is described as 'the night of destruction to the Nalas', who were ruling to the north of the Andhra kingdom.

165 He is called Indra-varman in the Rāmatīrtham plates (EI, 133 ff.) and Indrabhaṭṭāraka-varman in the Chikkullā plates (*EI*, IV, 183 ff.).

166 *JBBRAS*, XVI, 114.

varman I of the early Gaṅga dynasty, who was ruling in the Gaṅga year 39 (A.D. 537-38).[167]

Indra-varman was succeeded by his son Vikramendra-varman II. His Chikkullā plates are dated in the tenth regnal year. His recently discovered Tummalagūḍem plates record his grant of the village Irundera to the Buddhist *vihāra* Indrapura. They are dated in the eleventh regnal year and also in the Śaka year 488 (A.D. 556). This Śaka date has proved very important in fixing the chronology of the Vishṇukuṇḍins. The grant mentions one Mādhavarāja, who is probably identical with his brother Mādhava-varman (III). It seems that Vikramendra-varman II died without any male issue and was succeeded by Mādhava-varman. Another set of Tummalagūḍem plates, which also has recently come to light, mentions Govinda-varman (II), the son and successor of Mādhava-varman (III). It is dated in the 37th regnal year, and records the grant of another village to the same Buddhist *vihāra.*

These two new grants are very important for the chronology of the Vishṇukuṇḍins. Vikramendra-varman II's last known date is Śaka 488 (A.D. 566). We do not know how long Mādhava-varman III reigned, but his son and successor Govinda-varman II ruled for at least 37 years. Adding 37 to A.D. 566, we get A.D. 603. Vikramendra-varman II, Mādhava-varman III and Govinda-varman II must have reigned for some years more than what we learn from their own or their successors' grants. So Govinda-varman II was probably the Vishṇukuṇḍin king who was defeated and deposed by Pulakeśin II in *circa* A.D. 615. The battle was fought near the Kuṇāla (modern Kolleru) lake, where the Andhra king opposed him with his troop of elephants which had covered all space.[168] Pulakeśin II placed his younger brother Vishṇuvardhana on the throne of Veṅgī.[169]

The Vishṇukuṇḍins called themselves *parama-māheśvara,* i.e. fervent devotees of Maheśvara. Their family deity was Śrīparvata-svāmin, the lord of Śrīparvata, which is plainly identical with the well known Śriśaila in the Kurnool district. None of the grants known so far mentions any capital of the Vishṇukuṇḍins. Their predecessors, the Śālaṅkāyanas, ruled from Veṅgī, and the decisive battle in which they suffered a crushing defeat was fought at the Kunāla lake, which is only a few miles from Veṅgī. The Eastern Chālukyas, who succeeded them, also made the same place the seat of their government. It

167 *EI,* XXV, pp 281 ff. The Gaṅga era probably commenced on Chaitra śu. di I in A.D. 498. *SI,* IV, 162 ff.

168 *EI,* VI, 1 ff.

169 There is a sharp difference of opinion among scholars regarding the genealogy and chronology of the Vishṇukuṇḍins. For a different view, cf. *EDA,* Bk. IV. (Ed.)

seems probable, therefore, that Veṅgī was the capital of the Vishṇukuṇḍins also.

XI. THE EARLY KINGS OF KALIṄGA

The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra-gupta shows that there were four or five petty states in Kaliṅga about the middle of the fourth century A.D. Only two of these are known from inscriptions, viz Pishṭapura and Devarāshṭra. Pishṭapura is identical with Piṭhāpuram, a few miles north of Kākināḍa. Devarāshṭra seems to have comprised the territory near Vizagapatam. The other States mentioned in the Allahabad pillar inscription must have merged into one or other of these soon after Samudra-gupta's invasion. The published records of the afore-mentioned two States also are not dated in any era and do not generally give any genealogy of their kings.[170] Their chronology and order of succession have, therefore, to be settled from other evidence and are not quite certain.

The earliest ruler of the Māṭhara family who ruled from Pishṭapura was Śaṅkara-varman, who is mentioned in the Ningoṇḍi grant (No. 35) of his grandson Prabhañjana-varman. The earliest grant of the family known so far is that recorded in the Ragolu plates of his son Śakti-varman.[171] The plates were issued from Pishṭapura which was his capital at the time. They are dated in the thirteenth regnal year. Śakti-varman bore the title of *Mahārāja* and called himself 'the lord of the Kaliṅga country'. The identification of the places mentioned in his grant shows that the claim was not unjustified. He seems to have annexed the other petty States of Kaliṅga except perhaps that of Devarāshṭra. Neither he nor any of his descendants seems to have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas.

Śakti-varman was succeeded by his son Prabhañjana-varman, who removed his capital to Siṁhapura, from which place his Ningoṇḍi grant was issued. He calls himself *Kaliṅg-ādhipati*, 'lord of Kaliṅga', and the ruler of the country between the Kṛishnaveṇṇā and the Mahānadī. It is, however, doubtful if his rule extended to the south of the Godāvarī. He was followed by his son Anantaśakti-varman, who is known from two grants dated in the 14th and 28th regnal years (Nos. 102 and 103). The former was made at Vijayapura where he was encamped at the time and confirms the donation of a village made by

170 The grants generally give the name of the ruling king only. Only two grants of the kings of Devarāshṭra, viz the Srungavarapukota and Siripuram plates (*EI*, XIII, 56 ff.; XXIV, 47 ff.), mention three generations of the royal family.

171 *EI*, XII, 2 ff. That this is the earliest grant is shown by its simple phraseology and the forms of certain test letters. See the form of *n* which is mostly unlooped.

his grandfather (Āryaka) Śaktibhaṭṭāraka (i.e. Śakti-varman).[172] The other grant was issued from the capital Siṁhapura.

These grants are written in Sanskrit and, on palaeographic grounds, may be referred to the second half of the fourth century A.D. Śaṅkara-varman, the earliest known king of the family, seems therefore to have flourished soon after Mahendra of Pishṭapura who was vanquished by Samudra-gupta. Śakti-varman describes himself as an ornament of the Māṭhara family[173] and as the son of Vāsishṭhī, i.e. a lady of the Vasishṭha *gotra*. As the rulers of Devarāshṭra are known to have belonged to the Vasishṭha family, Śakti-varman may have descended, on his mother's side, from that family. Anantaśakti-varman had a long reign of nearly thirty years.

The next known king of Kaliṅga is Uma-varman, who bore the titles *Mahārāja* and *Kaliṅgādhipati.* Three land-grants made by him have been discovered so far. One of these was made at Siṁhapura, which seems to have continued as the royal capital. Uma-varman had a long reign of more than 30 years; for one of his grants is dated in the thirtieth regnal year.

Uma-varman was succeeded by Chaṇḍa-varman,[174] who also bore the title of *Mahārāja* and claimed to be the ruler of Kaliṅga. Both his known grants were made at Siṁhapura. One of them is dated in the fourth and the other in the sixth regnal year. He is described in one of them as a fervent devotee of Bhagavat (Vishṇu).

Viśākha-varman, who issued the Koroshonda plates in the seventh regnal year, was probably the next ruler. The plates record the king's grant of a village near Parlakimedi in the Ganjām district. Viśākha-varman bore the title of *Mahārāja* and though he does not claim in his grant to be the lord of Kaliṅga, he undoubtedly ruled over practically the same territory as his predecessors.

The records of these kings have unmistakable likeness in respect of phraseology in the eulogistic as well as the formal portions, which leaves no doubt that they belonged to the same family and flourished in the same period. Their sway seems to have extended from the Godāvarī in the south to the Mahānadī in the north. As stated before, their capital, which was Pishṭapura in the beginning, was soon

172 *EI*, XXVIII, 178.

173 *ARE*, 1935, p. 53. The Ragolu plates have the reading *Maga[dha]-kul-ālaṅkarishṇoh*, which, if correct, would show that his family hailed from Magadha and may have received the country of Kaliṅga from the Gupta emperor. But the mention of such a regional name of a royal family is unusual. The correct reading appears to be *Māṭhara-kula*, which occurs in other grants.

174 That Chaṇḍa-varman came after Uma-varman is shown by the fact the writer of his Tirithānaka grant was Rudradatta, who was the son of Matṛivira, the scribe of the Bṛihatprostha grant of Uma-varman, *EI*, XXVII, 36.

changed to Siṁhapura, modern Singupuram near Chicacole, which seems to have continued as the seat of their government to the last. These kings may be referred to the period A.D. 350-450.

There seems to have been a dynastic revolution at the end of Viśākha-varman's reign. The royal family which was previously ruling over Devarāshṭra, probably as a feudatory of the family of Siṁhapura, rose into prominence and extended its sway over the whole of Kaliṅga. Three grants of this family have been discovered so far, from which we get the following genealogy: *Mahārāja* Guṇa-varman, the lord of Devarāshṭra; his son *Mahārāja* Prabhañjana-varman; and the latter's son Ananta-varman. Prabhañjana had probably another name Nanda-varman as he issued a grant under the joint name Nanda-Prabhañjana-varman.[175] These kings are described as ornaments of the Vasishṭha family and sometimes had matrimonial connections with the paramount dynasty described above. Their records, which are far more elaborate, are written in somewhat later characters and borrow some expressions from the grants described above,[176] which leaves no doubt that these kings flourished in a later age.

Prabhañjana-varman, who calls himself lord of the entire Kaliṅga country, seems to have usurped power after the death of Viśākha-varman. He and his predecessors ruled from Devapura, which has not yet been definitely identified but was probably situated in the Yellamanchili *tālukā* of the Vizagapaṭam district.

Ananta-varman is the last-known king of this dynasty. He seems to have been a contemporary of the Vākāṭaka Harisheṇa. The latter invaded his kingdom and forced him to pay tribute. The Vākāṭaka invasion, which seems to have taken place towards the close of the fifth century A.D., apparently led to a dynastic revolution in Kaliṅga as it probably did in the Andhra country. A new royal family called Gaṅga established itself in Kaliṅga and started an era commencing in A.D. 498.[177] That it succeeded the afore-mentioned dynasties of Kaliṅga is shown by the phraseology of its records which have borrowed certain expressions from the earlier grants.[178] These Eastern Gaṅgas, as they are called, ruled over Northern Kaliṅga for several

175 *IA*, XIII, 49 ff.

176 The expression *ā-chandr-ārka-tāraka-pratishṭham-agrahāram kritvā sarva-karma-parihārais-cha parihritya* and *dharma-krama-vikramāṇām-anyatama-yogād-avāpya mahīm-anuśāsatām*, etc. which are characteristic of the grants made by the kings of Siṁhapura occur also in the Chicacole grant of Nanda-Prabhañjana-varman. *IA*, XIII, 59.

177 *SI*, IV, 166 ff.

178 For instance, the expressions cited in n. 176 above are imitated also in the earliest grant of the dynasty, viz, the Jirjingi plates of Indra-varman. *EI*, XXV, 287.

centuries, though they had to submit to the Early Chālukyas for some time. Their history is narrated in a later chapter.

Harisheṇa's invasion seems to have resulted in a dynastic change in Southern Kaliṅga also. A new family, later called Durjaya, established itself at Pishṭapura. The founder of this family was Raṇadurjaya, who assumed the title of *Mahārāja*. His son was Vikramendra. Both these princes are known only from the grants of Vikramendra's son Pṛithivī-mahārāja dated in the 46th and 49th regnal years (Nos. 113 and 114). The former grant was issued from Pishṭapura, which was the royal capital and the latter from the king's camp at Virajonagara, which has not been definitely identified. This family was ruling at Pishṭapura till the invasion of the country by Pulakeśin II. He defeated the ruling king and annexed the country, which he placed in charge of his younger brother Kubja-Vishṇuvardhana. The earliest known grant of Pulakeśin, made after the conquest of the Durjaya and Vishṇukuṇḍin territories, is that of the village Muruṭuru in the Guntūr district, which is dated in his eighth regnal year, i.e. in A.D. 617-18.[179]

179 *JIH*, XLIII, 742.

Appendices to Chapter Seven

I

LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		VĀKĀṬAKAS (Main Branch) RUDRASENA I	
1.	—	Deoṭek — S.	*CII*, V, p. 1.
		PRABHĀVATĪ-GUPTĀ (as regent for Yuvarāja Divākarasena)	
2.	13	Poona (?) — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 5.
		PRAVARASENA II	
3.	2 R.Y.	Jamb — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 10.
4-5.	11 R.Y.	Belora — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 16.
6.	18 R.Y.	Chammak — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 22.
7.	18 R.Y.	Siwani — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 28.
8.	19 R.Y.	Ṛiddhapur — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 33.
9.	23 R.Y.	Indore (?) — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 38.
10.	23 R.Y.	Dudia — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 43.
11.	23 R.Y.	Tirodi — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 48.
12.	25 R.Y.	Wadgaon — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 53.
13.	27 R.Y.	Pattan — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 57.
14.	29 R.Y.	Pandhurna	*CII*, V. p. 63.
15.	32 R.Y.	Pawni	*NUJ*, XVIII, p. 73
16.	—	Patna Museum (?) — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 69.
17.	—	Ramtek	*CII*, V, p. 73.
		PṚITHIVĪSHEṆA II	
18.	17 R.Y.	Mahurzari—CP	*VSMV*, 1971, p. 73
19.	—	Balaghat — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 79.
20.	—	Nachne-ki talai — S.	*CII*, V, p. 89.
21.	—	Ganj — S.	*CII*, V, p. 92.
		NAME OF KING LOST	
22.	—	Durg — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 93.
		VĀKĀṬAKAS (Vatsagulma Branch) VINDHYAŚAKTI II	
23.	37 R.Y.	Basim — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 93.
		DEVASENA	
24.	8. 380	Hisse-Borala — S.	*EI*, XXXVII, p. 1.
25.	—	India Office (?)	*CII*, V, p. 101.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		HARISHEṆA	
26.	—	Ajaṇṭa (Cave XVI) — S.	*CII*, V, p. 103.
27.	—	Ajaṇṭa (Cave XVII) — S.	*CII*, V, p. 120.
28.	—	Ghaṭotkacha — S.	*CII*, V, p. 112.
		A Private Vākāṭaka Record	
29.	—	Amaravati — S.	*EI*, XV, p. 267.
		Connected Inscriptions	
		BHĀRA KING BHAGADATTA	
30.	—	Pawni — S.	*EI*, XXIV, p. 11.
		ĀBHĪRAS	
		ISVARASENA	
31.	9 R.Y.	Nasik — C.	*CII*, IV, p. 1.
		RUDRASENA	
32.	127 (Ābhīra Era)	Devni-Mori — Casket	*EI*, XXXVII, p. 67.
		ĀBHĪRA FEUDATORIES	
		SVĀMIDĀSA	
33.	67 (Ābhīra Era)	Indore (?) — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 5.
		BHULUṆḌA	
34.	107 (Ābhīra Era)	Indore (?) — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 8.
		RUDRADASA	
35.	117 (Ābhīra Era)	Sirpur — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 10.
		ŚRĪDHARA-VARMAN	
36.	102 (Ābhīra Era)	Kānākherā — S.	*CII*, IV, p. 13.
37.	27 R.Y.	Eran — Pillar	*CII*, IV, p. 605.
		SUBANDHU	
38.	167 (Ābhīra Era)	Barwani — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 17.
39.	—	Bagh — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 19.
		TRAIKŪṬAKAS	
		DHARASENA	
40.	207 (Ābhīra Era)	Pardi — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 22.
		VYĀGHRASENA	
41.	241 (Ābhīra Era)	Surat — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 25.
		Name Unknown	
42.	245 (Ābhīra Era)	Kanheri — CP.	*CII*, IV, p. 29.
		MADHYAMASENA	
43.	256 (Ābhīra Era)	Matavan	*IS*, XXII, p. 5.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		VIKRAMASENA	
44.	284 (Ābhīra Era)	Matavan	*Khare Felicitation Volume*
		EARLY RĀSHṬRAKŪṬAS VIBHURĀJA	
45.	3 R.Y.	Hingni-Berdi—CP.	*EI*, XXIX, p. 174.
		AVIDHEYA	
46.	15 R.Y.	Pāṇḍaraṅgapallī Gr.	*EI*, XXXVII, p. 9.
		ABHIMANYU	
47.	—	(findspot unknown)	*JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 88.
		DEJJA	
48.	845 (Āguptayika Era)	Gokak — CP.	*EI*, XXI, p. 289.
		Kings of Śarabhapura NARENDRA	
49.	3 R.Y.	Pipardula — CP.	*IHQ*, XIX, p. 139.
50.	24 R.Y.	Kurud — CP.	*EI*, XXXI, p. 314.
		JAYARĀJA	
51.	5 R.Y.	Arang — CP.	*CII*, III. p. 191.
52.	5 R.Y.	Mallār — CP.	*EI*, XXXIII, p. 155.
53.	9 R.Y.	Mallār — CP.	*EI*, XXXIV, p. 28.
		PRAVARARĀJA I	
54.	41 R.Y.	Mallār	*EI*, XXXIV, p. 47.
		SUDEVARĀJA	
55.	2 R.Y.	Khariar — CP.	*EI*, IX, p. 170.
56.	7 R.Y.	Sirpur — CP.	*EI*, XXXII, p. 103.
57.	7 R.Y.	Arang — CP.	*EI*, XXIII, p. 18.
58.	7 R.Y.	Kauvatal — CP.	*EI*, XXXI, p. 314.
59.	10 R.Y.	Raipur — CP.	*CII*, III, p. 196.
60.	(R.Y. lost)	Sarangarh — CP.	*EI*, IX, p. 281.
		PRAVARARĀJA II	
61.	3 R.Y.	Thakurdiya — CP.	*EI*, XXII, p. 15.
62.	3 R.Y.	Mallār — CP.	*EI*, XXXIV, p. 53.
		SOMAVAṀŚĪS BHARATABALA *alias Indra*	
63.	2 R.Y.	Bamhani — CP.	*CII*, V, p. 82.
		UDAYANA	
64.	—	Kalanjara — S.	*Cun. A.S.R.*, XXI, p. 40. *EI*, IV, p. 257, n. 4.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		ĪŚĀNADEVA	
65.	—	Kharod — S.	*PRASWI* (1904), p. 54.
		NANNARĀJA I	
66.	—	Arang — S.	*JRAS* (1906), p. 617.
		TĪVARADEVA	
67.	5 R.Y.	Bonda — CP.	*EI*, XXXIV, p. 113.
68.	7 R.Y.	Rajim — CP.	*CII*, III, p. 291.
69.	9 R.Y.	Baloda — CP.	*EI*, VII, p. 102.
		NANNARĀJA II	
70.	—	Adhbhar — CP.	*EI*, XXXI, p. 219.
		ŚIVA-GUPTA	
71.	9 R.Y.	Bardula — CP.	*EI*, XXVII, p. 287.
72.	22 R.Y.	Bonda — CP.	*EI*, XXXV, p. 50 f.
73.	57 R.Y.	Lodhia — CP.	*EI*, XXVII, p. 319.
74.	—	Sirpur — S.	*EI*, XI, p. 184.
75.	—	Sirpur — S.	*EI*, XXXI, p. 197.
76.	—	Sirpur — S.	*IA*, XVIII, p. 179.
77.	—	Malhār — CP.	*EI*, XXIII, p. 113.
		NALAS BHAVADATTA-VARMAN	
78.	11 R.Y.	Ṛiddhapur	*EI*, XIX, p. 100.
		ARTHAPATI	
79.	7 R.Y.	Kesaribeda — CP.	*EI*, XXVIII, p. 12.
		SKANDA-VARMAN	
80.	—	Podāgarh — S.	*EI*, XXI, p 153.
		ĀNANDA KANDARA	
81.	—	Chezarlā	*SII*, VI, No. 594.
		ATTI-VARMAN	
82.	—	Gorantla — CP.	*IA*, IX, p. 102.
		DĀMODARA-VARMAN	
83.	2 R.Y.	Mattepad — CP.	*EI*, XVII, p. 327.
		ŚĀLANKĀYANAS DEVA-VARMAN	
84.	13 R.Y.	Ellore — CP.	*EI*, IX, p. 56.
		NANDI-VARMAN I	
85.	14 R.Y.	Kānukollu — CP.	*EI*, XXXI, p. 1.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		HASTI-VARMAN II	
86.	2 R.Y.	Penugoṇḍā — CP.	*EI*, XXXV, p. 145.
		SKANDA-VARMAN	
87.	1 R.Y.	Kanteru	*EI*, XXV, p. 42.
88.	1 R.Y.	Kānukallu	*EI*, XXXI, p. 7.
		NANDI-VARMAN II	
89.	7 R.Y.	Kolleru — CP.	*IA*, V, p. 175.
90.	10 R.Y.	Pedda-Veṅgī	*JAHRS*, I, p. 92.
		Kanteru	*JAHRS*, V, p. 31.
		VISHṆUKUṆḌINS MĀDHAVA-VARMAN I	
91.	37 R.Y.	Īpūr — CP.	*EI*, XVII, p. 334.
92.	48 (?) R.Y.	Pulomburu — CP.	*JAHRS*, VI, p. 17.
93.	—	Velupuru — S.	*EI*, XXXVII, p. 125.
94.	—	Khanapur — CP.	*EI*, XXVII, p. 312.
		MĀDHAVA-VARMAN II	
95.	47 R.Y.	Īpūr — CP.	*EI*, XVII, p. 327.
		INDRA-VARMAN	
96.	27 R.Y.	Ramatirtham — CP.	*EI*, XII, p. 133.
		Vikramendra-varman II	
97.	10 R.Y.	Chikkullā — CP.	*EI*, IV, p. 193.
		EARLY KINGS OF KALIṄGA SAKTI-VARMAN	
98.	11 R.Y. S. 488	Tummalagudem	*JIH*, XLIII, p. 733.
		GOVINDA-VARMAN II	
99.	37 R.Y.	Tummalagudem	*JIH*, XLIII, p. 738.
100.	13 R.Y.	Ragolu — CP.	*EI*, XII, p. 2.
		PRABHAÑJANA-VARMAN	
101.	—	Ningoṇḍi — Gr.	*EI*, XXX, p. 112.
		ANANTAŚAKTI-VARMAN	
102.	14 R.Y.	Andhavaram — CP.	*EI*, XXVIII, p. 175.
103.	28 R.Y.	Sakunaka — Gr.	*EI*, XXVIII, p. 226.
		UMA-VARMAN	
104.	9 R.Y.	Tekkali — CP.	*EI*, XXVIII, p. 298.
105.	30 R.Y.	Bṛihatprosṭha — CP.	*EI*, XII, p. 4.
106.	—	Dhavalapeṭa — CP.	*EI*, XXVI, p. 132.
		CHAṆḌA-VARMAN	
107.	4 R.Y.	Bobili — CP.	*EI*, XXVII, p. 33.
108.	6 R.Y.	Komarti — CP.	*EI*, IV, p. 142.
		VIŚĀKHA-VARMAN	
109.	7 R.Y.	Koroshanda — CP.	*EI*, XXI, p. 24.

Serial No.	*Year*	*Find-place*	*Reference*
		NANDAPRABHAÑJANA-VARMAN	
110.	—	Chicacole — CP.	*IA*, XIII, p. 47.
		ANANTA-VARMAN	
111.	—	Siripuram — CP.	*EI*, XXIV, p. 47.
112.	—	Srungavarapukota — CP.	*EI*, XXIII, p. 56.
		DURJAYAS PṚITHIVĪ-MAHĀRĀJA	
113.	46 R.Y.	Tandivada — Gr.	*EI*, XXIII, p. 95.
114.	49 R.Y.	Gollavalli — Gr.	*EI*, XXXV, p. 221.

II

EDITORIAL NOTE

The statement on page 165 above that Mādhava-varman re-instated Harisheṇa's grandson on the throne was challenged by Prof. K. A. N. Śāstrī, as the following observations will show:

'There is no evidence to show that Mādhava-varman ever restored the grandson of Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa to his ancestral throne. The Viśrutacharitra in the *Daśa-kumāra Charita* which is said to contain a suggestion that Mādhava-varman restored the Vākāṭaka prince to his kingdom does not mention either Mādhava or his Vākāṭaka protégé. It is a tale of adventure spun out by Daṇḍin; and this attempt to convert fiction into history cannot be accepted.

'It is true that Mādhava-varman II of the Īpūr II plates is spoken of as *"Tṛikūṭa-Mālayādhipati"*. One need not go in search of these places to distant Mahārāshṭra and Karṇāṭaka. They are found in the Andhra country itself. Kotappa-Koṇḍa in the Nara-saraopet TK of the Gunṭūr district was known in the 12th century as Trikoṭīśvara (*SII*, IV, 915, 916, 918, 919). Trikoṭīśvara, as pointed out by B. V. Krishna Rao, is a corruption of Trikūṭṭeśvara (*EDA*, 429); the name goes back to the time of the Kandāra kings who call themselves lords of Trikūṭa and the river Beṇṇa (*ibid*, p. 339). Malaya was also a part of the Telugu country; it was included in Veṅgī during the time of the E. Chālukyas (*SII*, IV, 1177). *"Veṅgī-nānti-Malayamaṇḍalamana"* in the Malaya-maṇḍala of Veṅgī-nāḍu—"Malayammuna Vishṇu-vardhana Mahārājulu" is an expression frequently met with in the inscriptions. Therefore there is no reason for believing that Mādhava-varman II ever ruled over Mahārāshṭra and Karṇāṭaka—since the Īpūr Plates II were issued from Amarapura (Amarāvatī in the Gunṭūr district), it is reasonable to believe that his authority was confined to the Andhra country. The only evidence in support of Mādhava-varman's rule over Southern Mahārāshṭra is the Roṭṭuṇaka Grant by one Mādhava-varman. Y. R. Gupta who edited this grant is of opinion that it "can roughly be assigned to the 5th or 6th century A.D. The grantor Mādhava-varman is unknown to history" (*JBBORS* (N.S.), IV, p. 89). The family to which this king belonged is not known. He is said to have performed, according to Mirashi, sacrifices which correspond to those attributed to Vishṇukuṇḍin Mādhava-varman I. It is solely on the similarity of the names of the two kings and the supposed resemblance of the sacrifices performed by them that Mirashi identifies these two. Evidence much stronger than this is needed to justify the assumption that Vishṇukuṇḍin Mādhava-varman ruled over the Southern Mahārāshṭra. It may be noted in this context that about the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century, there was another Mādhava-varman—Mādhava III of the W. Gaṅga family—

who was the sister's husband of Krishṇa-varman II of the Kadamba family. Therefore the proposed identification cannot be accepted without confirmatory evidence.'

To this observation Prof. V. V. Mirashi, the author of this chapter, has sent the following note (Ed.):

"I. After the death of the powerful Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa his weak and debauched son was killed by his feudatories who made common cause with the invader. In such a situation the young son of Harisheṇa's successor may have received help from Mādhava-varman I as suggested in the Viśrutacharita. The narrative appears to have a historical basis. That Mādhava-varman I extended his sway to Vidarbha is now proved by the discovery of his coins in the excavations at Pavnar (ancient Pravarapura, a Vākāṭaka capital) carried out by the Nagpur University. (See *"Paunar Excavation* (1967)" published by Nagpur University, pp. 14 ff.)

"There seems to be no doubt that Mādhava-varman I had extended his rule to Western Mahārāshṭra since some Vishṇukuṇḍin coins similar to those found at Pavnar have been found at Nevasa (Ahmednagar district). (See Sankalia's *From History to Prehistory,* Fig. 83, Nos. 1 and 3). They have wrongly been attributed to the Pallavas. This is shown by S. B. Deo in his *Pavnar Excavations*, p. 13, n. 4. So it should not be surprising if a copper-plate grant of Mādhava-varman I is found in the Sātārā district in Western Mahārāshṭra. The description that he was a *Sārvabhauma* and had performed Puṇḍarīka, Bahusuvarṇa and eleven sacrifices points to his identity with Mādhava-varman I of the Vishṇukuṇḍin family. K. A. N. Śāstrī would identify him with the Gaṅga king of that name only on similarity of names. There are no such details in favour of that identification. I leave it to scholars to decide which identification is more plausible.

"II. As for the description of *Trikūṭa-malay-ādhipati* Trikūṭa and Malaya are well known in the senses I have taken. Hultzsch also understood them in the same way. If Mādhava-varman I had extended his rule to Western Mahārāshṭra as shown above, it is not unlikely that one of his sons or grandsons was ruling over the western provinces of his empire. There is no point in saying that Mādhava-varman II was ruling over places which were only about 100 or 150 miles apart. Hultzsch admitted that the reading *Amarapurāt* was doubtful. There is some evidence of Vishṇukuṇḍin rule over Karnāṭaka in which Malaya is situated. As I have shown elsewhere, the Śaka era was current in Karṇāṭaka before it spread to Mahārāshṭra, Andhra and Kaliṅga. This was because of the rule of the Śakas over the territory. It was because of the connection of the Vishṇukuṇḍins with Karṇāṭaka that one of their grants (viz that recorded in the Tummalagudem plates of Vikramendra-bhaṭṭāraka) is dated in Śaka 488 (*JIH,* Vol. XLIII, 733 ff.). Again, if we take into account the genealogy of the Vishṇukuṇḍins there is hardly any room for Mādhava-varman II of the Īpūr plates (17th year) between Mādhava-varman I and his great-grandson Vikramendra-varman II (Śaka 488). See the following:

Mādhava-varman I (years 37 and 40) *circa* A.D. 475-526
|
Vikramendra-varman I
|
Indra-varman (year 27)
|
Vikramendra-varman II (year 11) (Śaka 488, A.D. 566).

"So the other grandson of Mādhava-varman I (viz Mādhava-varman II) was probably ruling not in the Andhra country but elsewhere in Mahārāshṭra and Karṇāṭaka (*Trikūṭa-malay-ādhipati*). I have put this forward as a possible hypothesis, because I am convinced that his grandfather Mādhava-varman I was ruling over Vidarbha and Mahārāshṭra at least, as shown by the finds of his coins and also his copper-plate grant found at Khanapur.'

CHAPTER EIGHT

EASTERN INDIA IN THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D.

I. THE MAUKHARIS

THE MAUKHARIS (OR MOKHARIS) are a very ancient family and were possibly known to Pāṇini and also to Patañjali.[1] Their antiquity is also proved by the legend 'Mokhaliṇam' written in Mauryan Brāhmī characters on a clay seal found at Gayā.[2] Three inscriptions found at Baḍvāh in the old Kotah State in Rājasthān refer to the Mokhari general Bala and his three sons. The latter erected three sacrificial pillars in the year 295 (A.D. 238).[3] The Chandravalli inscription[4] of the Kadamba king Mayūraśarman (*c.* A.D. 345-70) probably also refers to the Maukharis as one of the powers defeated by him. At a later period, when they became politically a great power, the Maukhari (called also Mukhara) princes claimed descent from the 'hundred sons whom King Aśvapati got from Vaivasvata', the reference being undoubtedly to the story recorded in the *Mahābhārata*, that Sāvitrī got a boon from Yama (Vaivasvata) to the effect that her father Aśvapati will have a hundred sons.[5] As Aśvapati was king of Madra in the Central Panjab, the family[6] might have originated in that locality or had some tradition to that effect, but of this we cannot be certain.

It is not till the sixth century A.D. that we come across definite

1 *EI*, XIV, 111.

2 *CII*, III, Introduction, 14.

3 *EI*, XXIII, 42. (The epithet *Mahāsenāpati*, translated as general, probably refers to the three sons of Bala, rather than to the latter.) A fourth inscription in the same place refers to a sacrifice performed by Maukhari Dhanuttrāta, son of Hastin.

4 *MAR*, 1929, p. 50.

5 Pandit Hirananda Sastri took Vaivasvata to be the seventh Manu (*EI*, XIV, 111), but cf. *PHAI*, 510 and n. 2. The grammatical references, noted above, as well as the expression 'line of Mukhara' used by Bāṇa (*HC*, 128) seem to indicate that Mukhara was the eponymous ancestor of the family.

6 It has been suggested that the Maukharis were a clan and not a family and are represented by the Mauhari caste of Gayā (T. G. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, 80).

evidence of the Maukharis as a ruling power.[7] Three inscriptions[8] engraved on the Barābar and Nāgārjunī hills, about 15 miles to the north-east of Gayā, refer to three generations of Maukhari kings. Yajña-varman, who probably founded this family, was succeeded by his son Śārdūla-varman and the latter again by his son Ananta-varman. All the three records belong to the reign of Ananta-varman. They give high-sounding praises to the rulers but do not throw any light on their history. Śārdūla-varman is described in one of the records as *sāmanta-chūḍāmaṇih* (crest-jewel of the feudatory chiefs), and there can be hardly any doubt that he was feudatory to the Imperial Guptas. It is, however, noteworthy that none of the records refers to the paramount sovereigns. The records are not dated but have been referred to the sixth century A.D. on palaeographic grounds. It seems likely that Ananta-varman flourished at a time when the Gupta Empire had begun to decline. We may provisionally place him and his two predecessors in the first half of the sixth century A.D., probably even a little earlier.[9]

Another branch of the Maukharis, who ultimately became more powerful, is known from several seals and inscriptions. The royal seals[10] give us the following genealogy:

1. *Mahārāja* Hari-varman *m.* Jayasvāminī
2. *Mahārāja* Āditya-varman *m.* Harsha-guptā
3. *Mahārāja* Īśvara-varman *m.* Upa-gupta
4. *Mahārājādhirāja* Īśāna-varman *m.* Lakshmīvatī
5. *Mahārājādhirāja* Śarva-varman *m.* Indra-bhaṭṭārikā
6. *Mahārājādhirāja* Avanti-varman
7. *Mahārājādhirāja* Su . . .

The distinction between the titles given to the first three kings and the rest leaves no doubt that the reign of Īśāna-varman marked the rise of the family to power and prestige. As all the inscriptions of the

7 Reference is made to a Maukhari king Kshatra-varman in *HC* in the long list of rulers who met their doom through the treachery of others. But although this king must have lived before, and may be long before, the seventh century A.D., we have no means to determine his age.

8 *CII*, III, nos. 48, 49, 50 (pp. 221-28).

9 N. G. Majumdar thinks that these inscriptions are considerably earlier than the Hārāhā inscription (A.D. 554), while C. V. Vaidya thinks that they are later than Harsha's time (*IA*, XLVI, 127). N. Ray regards the Maukhari chiefs as governors of the Kanauj Maukharis, to be referred to later on (*Cal. Rev.*, 1928, p. 210).

10 Āsirgaḍh seal of Śarva-varman (*CII*, III, 219). Two seals from Nālandā (*EI*, XXIV, 283). The son of Avanti-varman is mentioned in one of the Nālandā seals, but only the first letter of the name, *su*, is legible. The name may be restored as Surasena (cf. *IHQ*, XI, 320), but see later.

family, other than the small seals and coins, have been found within the limits of the modern State of U.P., we may roughly regard it as the seat of their power. Fortunately, we possess a date of Īśāna-varman, viz 611[11] which, referred to the Vikrama era, gives A.D. 554, as one of his regnal years. There can thus be hardly any doubt that the three predecessors of Īśāna-varman were feudatories of the Gupta Empire and flourished in the first half of the sixth century A.D., or even somewhat earlier. It would thus follow that two Maukhari families ruled as feudatory chiefs in S. Bihar and U.P. since the time of Budha-gupta.

There can be hardly any doubt that the decline of the power of the Imperial Guptas, early in the sixth century A.D., gave an opportunity to the Maukharis to assert their authority. The Jaunpur inscription of Īśvara-varman[12] contains a great deal of information about a Maukhari king. But unfortunately, on account of the damaged nature of the stone, it is difficult to identify this king or to understand the real significance of the various military campaigns described in it. Mention is made of the Andhra king who, out of fear, took his abode in the Vindhya mountains, and also of the Andhra warriors; and it is probable, though by no means certain, that the Maukhari king had to fight with them. Disjointed reference to Raivataka and Himālaya mountains may also be taken to imply that the Maukhari king proceeded to these regions in the course of military campaigns, probably on behalf of his overlord. More doubtful is the reference to Dhārā, which has been taken as the name of the city which became famous in later days, but may be nothing more than the common word meaning 'rim of a wheel'.[13] It is further said that he allayed the troubles caused by the approach of cruel people and thereby effected the happiness of mankind. There is possibly a reference here to the Hūṇa invasion and the co-operation offered by the Maukhari king to the Gupta Emperor Narasiṁha-gupta in defeating Mihirakula. But these inferences are very vague and doubtful, we do not also know for certain the name of the Maukhari king concerned. The stone containing the inscription is broken, and 'from thirty-eight to seventy-two letters—probably the larger number—are lost at the beginning of each line'. Although, therefore, King Īśvara-

11 The date has also been interpreted as 589, but the other view is more reasonable (cf. *IA*, XLVI, 25-26).

12 *CII*, III, 228.

13 The expression '*Dhārā-mārgga-vinirgat-āgni-kaṇika*' (I, 6) has been translated by Fleet as 'a spark of fire that had come by the road from (the city of) Dhārā' (*CII*, III, 230). But it may refer to the spark of fire issuing from wheels (*dhārā*) of the chariot. Basak takes *dhārā* as the edge of the sword 'from which sparks of fire came out' (*HNI*, 109).

varman is mentioned in line 4 of the inscription, Fleet very rightly observers that 'the lacunae in the following lines are so extensive, that it is impossible to say whether the historical information given in them refers to Īśvara-varman, or to one of his descendants'.[14]

The earliest Maukhari king about whom we possess some reliable information is Īśāna-varman. He is said to have defeated the Andhras and the Śūlikas and forced the Gauḍas to remain in their proper realm. The Gauḍas were undoubtedly the people of Bengal. The expression referring to them is not easy to interpret. Basak translates the passage as follows: '(He) made the Gauḍa people take shelter towards the sea-shore, after causing their land territories to be deprived of their future prospects.'[15] According to the translation of Hirananda Sastri, 'He caused the Gauḍas, living on the sea-shore, in future to remain within their proper realm.' The latter seems to be preferable.[16] By the Andhras probably the Vishṇukuṇḍins are meant; king Mādhava-varman of this family, who probably lived about this time, is said to have 'crossed the river Godāvarī with the desire to conquer the eastern region'.[17] It is probable that the fight with the Andhra king took place in the Vindhya region as stated in the Jaunpur inscription.

The Śūlikas defeated by Īśāna-varman cannot be identified. It has been suggested that they were probably the Chālukyas.[18] In the *Bṛihat-Saṁhitā* the Śūlikas are sometimes associated with Gandhāra and Vokkāṇa (Wakhan).[19] It is not unlikely that they were a branch of the Hūṇas who occupied these regions in the sixth century A.D. Now, it is a well-known fact that Īśāna-varman issued coins in imitation of Toramāṇa, the Hūṇa chief. These are close copies of the Imperial Gupta coins but distinguished by a date, which is 52 in the coins of Toramāṇa, and 54, 55 etc.[20] in the coins of Īśāna-varman.

14 *CII*, III, 229. N. G. Majumdar (*IA*, XLVI, 127), R. G. Basak (*HNI*, 109), and R. S. Tripathi (*History of Kanauj*, 38) attribute the conquests to Īśvara-varman, D .C Sircar assigns the victories to Īśāna-varman or one of his successors (*JIH*, XLII, 127).

15 *HNI*, 131.

16 None of the interpretations is very satisfactory. Most probably the expression read as *chāyatimochita* in l. 13 is really *chāpratimochita*. It would then simply mean that the Gauḍas, unable to redeem (recover) their own country in the highlands, were forced to take refuge in sea-side regions (cf. *IC*, XI, 123; *JRASBL*, XI, 69).

17 *PHAI*, 509; *supra*, p. 166.

18 *PHAI*, 509. The name Chālukya or Chalukya is written as Chalikya in the Mahākūta Pillar Ins. (*IA*, XIX. 16). It appears as Solaki or Solaṅki in the records of Gujarat.

19 These and other references to Śūlikas and Saulikas in *Bṛihat-Saṁhitā* are noticed in *PHAI*, 509, n. 5.

20 These coins will be discussed later.

A study of these coins leaves no doubt that Īśāna-varman ruled over territories which were once wrested from the Guptas by Toramāṇa. That Īśāna-varman fought with the Hūṇas may also be inferred from a statement in the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena which will be presently discussed. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Śūlikas represented a Hūṇa tribe by defeating whom Īśāna-varman conquered a part of the Gupta dominions which had been seized by Toramāṇa.

It would thus appear that Īśāna-varman fully deserved the title *Mahārājādhirāja*. He was the first in his family to assume this title and to issue coins, and his Hārāhā *praśasti* mentions no conquests of any of his predecessors.[21] He was, most probably, the first Maukhari king to set up an independent kingdom and establish the power and prestige of the family. We know from the Hārāhā inscription that he was on the throne in A.D. 554. His reign, therefore, coincides with the fall of the Gupta Empire, and his activities and achievements must have had a close connection with it. The Hārāhā inscription says that the earth was like a sinking boat which Īśāna-varman held fast by means of ropes (v. 15)—an apt description of the political chaos out of which he salvaged an empire.

Unfortunately for Īśāna-varman, he was not the only one to take advantage of the disruption of the Gupta Empire. Another family, generally designated the Later Guptas, rose into prominence about the same time and challenged the Maukharis' bold bid for imperial power. This led to a long and protracted war which lasted for more than half a century and resulted in the complete destruction of the house of the Maukharis.

This war will be described in connection with the history of the Later Guptas. It will suffice to state here that Kumāra-gupta of this family claims to have defeated 'the army of the glorious Īśāna-varman, a very moon among kings'. Further, Kumāra-gupta's son Dāmodara-gupta 'broke up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukhari which had thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Hūṇas'.[22]

It is thus quite clear that there was a protracted struggle between the two powers. As the Guptas claim success, while the Hārāhā inscription, which records the glorious military exploits of Īśāna-varman, is altogether silent about the fight with the Guptas, it is

21 The view that Īśāna-varman's campaigns 'preceded his sitting on his father's throne', i.e. that they were undertaken when his father was still ruling (*IA*, XLVI, 127; *HNI*, 111) is based on a very far-fetched interpretation of verse 13 of the Hārāhā Ins. and cannot be accepted without more positive evidence.

22 Aphsad ins. *CII*, III, 206. The different interpretations of this passage will be discussed later.

reasonable to assume that the Maukharis were defeated by both Kumāra-gupta and his son Dāmodara-gupta. It is, however, just possible that the fight between Īśāna-varman and Kumāra-gupta took place after the Hārāhā inscription was engraved.

The way in which Īśāna-varman is referred to in the Gupta inscription is significant. It shows that the Maukhari king had already secured a pre-eminent position in Indian politics. More importance attaches to the statement that the Maukhari army had defeated the Hūṇas. The credit is not specifically given to any particular Maukhari king. But the reference seems to be to Īśāna-varman himself. He is mentioned by name in connection with the previous conflict between the Maukharis and the Guptas, and if a separate king were intended in the next verse, he would probably have been specifically named. We may, therefore, take Īśāna-varman, rather than his successor, to be the adversary of Dāmodara-gupta. This does not necessarily mean that it was Īśāna-varman who defeated the Hūṇas, for the credit is given to the Maukhari army which might have achieved this feat during the preceding reign. But all the circumstances taken together (pp. 183-84) point out to Īśāna-varman as the conqueror of the Hūṇas. He might have done it, early in his career, on behalf of the Gupta Emperor, and then, like Yaśodharman, utilised his success to carve out an independent kingdom. It is also not unlikely that he fought with the successors of Mihirakula after he had set up as an independent king. As noted above, the Śūlikas conquered by Īśāna-varman, might also have been a branch of the Hūṇas.

Īśāna-varman was succeeded by his son Śarva-varman. The one important thing we know of him is his possession of a part of Magadha. This follows from an inscription[23] recording the grant of a village by Jīvita-gupta, a king of the Later Gupta family in the eighth century A.D. The inscription incidentally refers to three past rulers, along with some details only partially preserved, which seem to indicate that the first certainly, and the second and third, also probably, were in possession of the same village. The first of these kings, Bālāditya, was undoubtedly the Gupta Emperor Narasiṁha-gupta, and the two others, Śarva-varman and Avanti-varman, can be easily identified with the two Maukhari kings that followed Īśāna-varman. The village granted is named Vāruṇika, which is evidently represented by modern Deo-Baraṇārk where the inscription was found. It is situated about 25 miles south-west of Arrah, the chief town of Shahabad district in Bihar. Thus some time after the reign of Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya, at least a part of Magadha, including the region

23 *CII*, III, 213. For discussions on this topic cf. *IC*, XI, 124-25, *JRASBL*, XI, 69.

where Vāruṇika was situated, probably passed into the hands of the Maukharis. If the Later Guptas had been in possession of Magadha in the time of Kumāra-gupta and Īśāna-varman, we can only presume that Śarva-varman was more successful in his fight with the Later Guptas. But the place where the Later Guptas ruled about this time is a debatable issue and will be discussed later.

Both Śarva-varman and his son and successor Avanti-varman are styled *Mahārājādhirāja.* Under them the Maukharis enjoyed high renown and prestige as a great power. We read in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harsha-charita*[24] that king Prabhākara-vardhana of Kanauj gave his daughter Rājyaśrī in marriage to the son of Avanti-varman, because, as he told his queen, 'at the head of all royal houses stood the Maukhari family and the pride of that family was Avanti-varman'. Even making due allowance for the context in which this eulogy is uttered, it shows that the Maukharis were highly esteemed towards the close of the sixth century A.D. This is confirmed by another flattering reference to the Maukharis in one of the introductory verses to the *Kādambarī* (v. 4).

Nothing of importance is known either of Śarva-varman or of Avanti-varman. But Avanti-varman's eldest son Graha-varman figures prominently in Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita* on account of his marriage with Rājyaśrī, the daughter of Prabhākara-vardhana. It is said that Graha-varman himself sought for the hand of the princess and sent an envoy extraordinary for the betrothal ceremony. As no reference is made to his father, either in these negotiations or in connection with the actual marriage ceremony, it is a reasonable presumption that Avanti-varman had died earlier. In any event, later references[25] indicate that Graha-varman ascended the throne of his father. But this is hardly in keeping with the royal genealogy of the Maukharis known from their seals and inscriptions (supra, p. 181). It is unfortunate that the full name of the son and successor of Avanti-varman has not been preserved, but it begins with the letter *Su* followed by another letter which has been doubtfully read as *va* or *cha.* We cannot, therefore, take him to be Graha-varman, unless we assume that he had a second name. The most reasonable way of reconciling the known facts is to suppose that Graha-varman succeeded his father but, being killed without leaving any issue, was succeeded by his younger brother. This, however, raises other problems which, together with the subsequent fate of Graha-varman and his kingdom, will be

24 Eng. Transl. by Cowell, p. 123; Nirṇayasāgara edn., p. 140.

25 Graha-varman is referred to as Deva, which Cowell has rightly translated as 'His Majesty' (p. 173). The whole episode of Graha-varman, which will be discussed later on the authority of Bāṇa, shows that he was the ruling king.

discussed in connection with Harsha-vardhana. In conclusion, we must consider some general questions concerning the Maukharis.

A large number of the coins of Īśāna-varman, Śarva-varman and Avanti-varman contain dates. Unfortunately these are very indistinct, and there is a wide divergence between the readings of different scholars.[26] Curiously enough, the dates of each of the kings fall in two classes, one consisting of two and the other of three digits. To the first category, belong the dates variously read as 40, 54, 55, 60, 70, etc. for Īśāna-varman, 58 for Śarva-varman, and 57, 71, etc. for Avanti-varman. Similarly in the second category we have 245 and 257 for the first king, 234 and 259 for the second, and 250 and 260 for the third. It will be seen that in both the categories, the dates of later kings, as read by some scholars, are earlier than those of their predecessors, as read by others. No reliance can, therefore, be placed on these dates. The dates in three digits must be referred to the Gupta Era, but the interpretation of those with two digits is more difficult. Some[27] have referred them to the Maukhari era beginning from about A.D. 500 or 499, when Āryabhaṭa composed his great astronomical work, and exactly 3,600 years of the Kaliyuga had elapsed. But if the Maukharis had really established an era of their own it is difficult to explain why only the Vikrama era was used in their official records, such as the Hārāhā inscription, and the Gupta Era on some of their coins. Most probably the dates in two digits are also to be referred to the Gupta Era with two hundreds omitted.

Thus the only fixed point in the chronology of the Maukhari rulers is the date for Īśāna-varman furnished by Hārāhā inscription, viz A.D. 554. The reigns of his two successors probably covered the rest of the sixth century A.D., for, as we shall see later, Avanti-varman's son Graha-varman was on the throne in A.D. 606. If we accept the dates on the coins as read by Dikshit, the latest scholar to give a consistent interpretation of the whole series, we get 245-57 for Īśāna-varman, 258-59 for Śarva-varman and 260 for Avanti-varman. Referring these dates to the Gupta Era, and taking into consideration the Hārāhā inscription, we may provisionally accept the following chronological scheme:

Īśāna-varman	*c.* 550-76
Śarva-varman	*c.* 576-80
Avanti-varman	*c.* 580-600
Graha-varman	*c.* 600-6.

These four kings thus ruled for a little more than half a century. If

26 These have been discussed fully by Tripathi (*THK*, 55 ff.).
27 Burn in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 848.

we assign an equal period to the first four kings who preceded Īśāna-varman, the beginning of the dynasty may be placed roughly at about A.D. 500.

The findspots of coins and inscriptions leave no doubt that Uttara Pradesh or a major part of it constituted the nucleus of the Maukhari kingdom.[28] As noted above, a portion of South Bihar, at least the Shahabad district, formed part of it during the reigns of Śarva-varman and Avanti-varman. How far, if at all, the Maukhari kingdom extended beyond these limits, it is difficult to determine. Some scholars have suggested 'that the fortress of Āsirgaḍh fell into the hands of the Maukharis'.[29] This view rests upon the belief that a seal of Śarva-varman was found at Āsirgaḍh (Nimar district, M.P.). The inference is unwarranted even if the belief were true, for even copper-plates, not to speak of smaller objects like seals which are easily portable, can be carried to places very remote from their origin. As a matter of fact, however, only an impression of the seal was found in A.D. 1805 or 1806 at Āsirgaḍh in a box containing property of the *Mahārāja* Sindhia. There is no record whether the original seal was ever found,[30] and there is no real basis for the presumption that the fort of Āsirgaḍh in the Deccan formed a part of the Maukhari kingdom.

Equally untenable, though far less improbable, is the view that the Maukhari king Śarva-varman exercised sway in the Kangra district (Panjab). A copper-plate[31] refers to lands in this region being formerly granted to a temple by *Mahārāja* Śarva-varman. But the identification of this king with the Maukhari Śarva-varman is very doubtful,[32] particularly because the Maukhari king is designated *Mahārājādhirāja* in his official records. The copper-plate, however, belongs to a period when the Maukharis probably ceased to exercise any authority they might have once possessed over this area, and so the discrepancy in the titles cannot be regarded as very material. It is also not unlikely that the fight against the Hūṇas brought Śarva-varman as far as the upper Sutlej. But that would involve the assumption that the intervening region, e.g. Thāneśvar, also acknowledged the supremacy of the Maukhari king. Such important inferences, however, should not be drawn merely from the identity of names, and

28 *THK*, 52.

29 T. G. Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, Maukharis and Sangam Age*, 96-97.

30 *CII*, III, 219.

31 Found at Nirmand on the right bank of the upper course of the Sutlej in the Kangra district (31°-25′ N × 77°-38′ E) (*CII*, III, 288).

32 For the contrary view, cf. J. N. Banerji in *Calcutta Review*, January 1950 and *PAIOC*, XII (Summary of Papers, p. 87).

we shall therefore hardly be justified in including Kangra within the dominions of the Maukharis.

It is generally assumed that Kānyakubja, modern Kanauj on the Gaṅga in Farrukhabad district, was the capital city of the Maukharis. This view mainly rests upon the statements of Bāṇa which will be discussed later. But these refer to the period of Avanti-varman and his son towards the end of the sixth century A.D., and need not necessarily apply to earlier times.[33]

Reference may be made in this connection to a passage in the Sirpur inscription[34] of the Somavaṁsi king Śiva-gupta Bālārjuna. It tells us that the mother of this king was the daughter of Sūrya-varman who was 'born in the unblemished family of the Varmans, great on account of (their) supremacy over Magadha'. This Sūrya-varman has been identified with the son of Īśāna-varman bearing the same name, mentioned in the Hārāhā inscription.[35] If this identity be maintained, it may be argued, though it does not necessarily follow, that Magadha, and not U.P., was the chief centre of the Maukharis, at least up to the time of Sūrya-varman. This conclusion, it is claimed, is supported by the fact that a line of Maukhari rulers, as noted above (p. 185), actually ruled in Magadha.[36] This view seems to be plausible, but is not free from doubts and difficulties. In the first place, the identification of king Sūrya-varman mentioned in the Sirpur inscription with the son of Īśāna-varman is doubtful. For the Sirpur inscription represents Sūrya-varman as a king (*nṛipa*), whereas it does not appear that the son of Īśāna-varman bearing that name ever ascended the throne.[37] It has been urged that, excepting the Maukharis, no lords of Magadha, bearing the title Varman, are known. But this is by no means certain. For Hiuan Tsang refers to a king of Magadha, called Pūrṇa-varman, the last of the race of Aśoka,[38] who was a contemporary of Śaśāṅka and therefore, also probably, of Graha-varman, son

33 For a full discussion with references, cf. *THK*, 32.

34 Sirpur Ins. v. 16; *EI*, XI, 195. Above, p. 152.

35 D. C. Sircar (*IHQ*, XIX, 277, n. 11 and *JRASBL*, XI, 72) maintains the identification on the authority of Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri who merely hints at the probability of the Sūrya-varman of the Sirpur ins. being 'identical with, or a descendant of, Sūrya-varman, the son of Īśāna-varman' (*PHAI*, 512, n. 1). A. Ghosh rejects the identification (*EI*, XXV, 268) on grounds which have been criticised by D. C. Sircar (loc. cit.).

36 D. C. Sircar, op. cit.

37 Sircar's arguments against this objection are hardly convincing. The description in the Sirpur ins., read with the context, hardly leaves any doubt that Sūrya-varman was a king and not a mere ruler of a district under his father.

38 Rightly or wrongly Pūrṇa-varman was regarded by his contemporaries as belonging to the Maurya family; it is, therefore, difficult to accept Sircar's suggestion that Pūrṇa-varman possibly belonged to the Maukhari family (*IHQ*, XIX, 277 n. 11).

of Avanti-varman. He could not possibly be a Maukhari, and yet his family might have been ruling in Magadha. Besides, there was the other Maukhari family. One scholar has argued that 'it is unlikely that the line of Hari-varman was unrelated to the Maukharis of Gayā', and that 'there is absolutely no proof that Īśāna-varman had his capital in U.P. and not in Bihar'.[39] This is indeed true, but there is also nothing to show that Īśāna-varman was the ruler of Magadha; on the other hand, both the inscriptions of the family and almost all the coins, including those of Īśāna-varman, have been found within the boundaries of U.P. and not in Magadha. The Maukhari seals found at Nālandā do not count for much in this context, for similar seals of even rulers of Kāmarūpa have been found there, and that merely proves the existence of communication between the kingdom and the famous religious and educational centre of the time. On the whole, therefore, it seems legitimate to conclude that Kanauj was most probably the capital city of the Maukharis from the very beginning, though we have no positive evidence of it for the earlier period.

II. THE LATER GUPTAS

The designation 'Later Gupta' has been given by modern historians to a royal family that rose to power about the same time as the Maukharis. The name, obviously intended to distinguish it from the Imperial Guptas, is neither accurate nor convenient. There is no evidence to show that this family was in any way connected by blood with the Imperial Guptas. The fact that no such claim is put forward in the inscriptions of the dynasty seems to be decisive on this point. For it is almost unthinkable that such an illustrious ancestry should not have been referred to by the court-poets of the Later Guptas if they had the least pretension to it. It is important to note that the family never calls itself by the name 'Gupta',[40] and there is at least one ruler, whose name ends in 'Sena' and not Gupta. Besides, the name 'Later Gupta' is somewhat misleading as it might as well, and perhaps with greater propriety, be applied to the successors of Skanda-gupta or Budha-gupta, whom we now style as Later Imperial Guptas, though the epithet 'Imperial' is hardly applicable to many of them. Nevertheless, as the name has gained currency, we have to continue its use.

The history of the Later Guptas is similar in many respects to that

39 D. C. Sircar, *JRASBL*, XI, 72.

40 In the Aphsad inscriptions the family is simply referred to as *sad-vaṁśa* 'good lineage'. It has been suggested that 'the Guptas and the Gupta *Kulaputra* mentioned in Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* and *Harsha-charita* may refer to this family' (*PHAI*, 507 n. 1). But this is uncertain.

of the Maukharis. They, too, were at first feudatory to the Imperial Guptas, and came into prominence and gained independence about the same time as the Maukharis. They established a powerful kingdom which lasted till about the middle of the eighth century A.D.

No record of the first seven kings of this family has yet come to light. All that we know of its early history is derived from a single inscription issued by the eighth king, Āditya-sena, who flourished in the second half of the seventh century. This inscription, which was found at Aphsad, near Gayā, gives the following genealogy:

1. Kṛishṇa-gupta
2. Harsha-gupta.
3. Jīvita-gupta
4. Kumāra-gupta.
5. Dāmodara-gupta
6. Mahāsena-gupta
7. Mādhava-gupta
8. Āditya-sena.

No royal title is given to any of these, they being simply called Śrī. It is, however, known from other records[41] that Āditya-sena assumed full imperial titles. No great importance need, therefore, be attached to the absence of royal titles in this particular record which, being composed throughout in verse, was less likely to contain them.[42] It is, however, to be noted that Kṛishṇa-gupta is called a *nṛipa* (king), and similar epithets are applied to his successors. There is hardly any doubt that they were at first feudatories of the Guptas.

As Kumāra-gupta, the fourth king of this dynasty, is said to have defeated Īśāna-varman, the fourth king of the Maukhari line, it may be presumed that both the families came into prominence about the same time, i.e. about A.D. 500 or a little earlier. It has also been suggested that Harsha-guptā, the queen of the second Maukhari king, was a sister of Harsha-gupta,[43] the second king of the Later Gupta

41 Mandar Hill Rock inscriptions, *CII*, III, 211.

42 It is to be noted, however, that the Shahpur Stone Image inscription (*ibid.*, 208) also does not give any imperial title to Āditya-sena. More curious is the genealogical portion in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscriptions of Jīvita-gupta II (*ibid.*, 213) which gives the imperial titles to all the three successors of Āditya-sena, but calls him only Śrī, though his mother and queen are both called *Parama-bhaṭṭārikā* and *rājñī*. These examples should serve as a caution against attaching undue importance to royal titles even in official genealogy.

43 *PHAI*, 511, where the further suggestions are made that Īśāna-varman's mother Upa-guptā and Prabhākara-vardhana's mother Mahāsena-guptā were Gupta princesses. Too much importance, however, should not be attached to similarity of names or name-endings. There was for example, one Harsha-gupta among the Somavaṁśī rulers of South Kosala, whose father and son also bore names ending in Gupta.

family. We may presume that at first the relation between the two families was friendly, but the ambitious military enterprises of Īśāna-varman first brought about hostility between the two.

While there is no doubt that Īśāna-varman definitely threw off the allegiance of the Imperial Guptas, we do not know for certain who among the Later Guptas was the first to do so. The Aphsad inscription describes in very general and conventional terms the military achievements of the first three kings. It is said of the third king that his foes could not get rid of 'the very terrible scorching fever (of fear)' even though they stood on sea shores or the Himālaya mountain. This might be a mere poetic expression or indicate military campaigns in the north and south. But there is nothing to show whether these campaigns were undertaken by the Later Gupta rulers as feudatories on behalf of their suzerains or as independent chiefs. The former view appears to be the more probable.

More details are furnished about the next king Kumāra-gupta. He defeated the Maukhari king Īśāna-varman, who is described as 'a very moon among kings'. This defeat is compared to the churning of the ocean out of which arose Lakshmī. It is very likely that the poet deliberately used this simile in order to indicate that the defeat inflicted upon Īśāna-varman by Kumāra-gupta was the source of the latter's fortune or sovereignty. This appears probable even on general grounds. For the Hārāhā inscription clearly indicates that Īśāna-varman had successfully challenged the supremacy of the Imperial Guptas some time before A.D. 554. The deferential manner in which he and his army are referred to in the record of his enemies, the Later Guptas, leaves no doubt that he had already established a position, if not of supremacy, at least of great authority.

Whether Kumāra-gupta fought with Īśāna-varman on behalf of the Gupta Emperor, or as an independent rival king eager to share the spoils of the Empire, cannot be definitely determined. But whatever that might have been, the great victory over the powerful Maukhari chief improved Kumāra-gupta's position to such an extent as to entitle him to rank virtually as an independent chief. We may reasonably look upon him as having laid the foundations of the greatness of the family, and its first independent ruler *de facto*, if not *de jure*. If we remember that no record of the Imperial Gupta family is known after A.D. 543, we may well believe that some time about A.D. 550 both Īśāna-varman and Kumāra-gupta formally assumed independence.

So far we are on tolerably sure ground. But the moment we try to locate the kingdom or sphere of influence of Kumāra-gupta we find ourselves in great difficulty. There is no doubt that in later times his descendants ruled in Magadha, but some scholars hold the view that

the Later Guptas orginally ruled in Malwa, and it was only after the regin of Harsha-vardhana that they came into possession of Magadha. No definite solution of this intriguing problem is possible in the present state of our knowledge, and its discussion involves a knowledge of the subsequent history of this family. We shall, therefore, reserve it for an appendix to this section. It will suffice to state here that in the opinion of the present writer the Later Guptas were, so to say, the residuary legatees of the Imperial Guptas; at least they regarded themselves as such. They came into possession of Malwa, Magadha, and North Bengal, and laid claim to those parts of the empire which had recently seceded from it, such as the Maukhari kingdom and Southern Bengal. Viewed in this light, the fight between the Later Guptas and the Maukharis assumed the character of a struggle, on the part of the former, to re-establish the supremacy of the empire which they believed to have rightfully inherited. There is no doubt that at first they gained great success. Kumāra-gupta is said to have died at Prayāga after his victory over Īśāna-varman. It is evident that he advanced as far as Allahabad.

The struggle was continued or renewed in the reign of Dāmodara-gupta, son of Kumāra-gupta. The name of his Maukhari adversary is not mentioned, but we may reasonably presume that it was Īśāna-varman himself, for if there had been a new Maukhari king he would probably have been named. This is not a very material point, but what is more disconcerting is the vagueness of the language in which the result of the battle is described. The passage, bereft of unnecessary details, may be rendered as follows:

> 'Having slain the enemies (i.e. the Maukharis) and breaking up the array of their mighty elephants, he (Dāmodara-gupta) became unconscious (*saṁmūrchchhita*) and was revived by the touch of the heavenly damsels (*suravadhū*).'

Fleet took this passage to mean that Dāmodara-gupta died in the battle and went to heaven. This was further interpreted by others to indicate that Dāmodara-gupta was defeated in the battle.[44] On the other hand, it has been pointed out that the record merely speaks of the swoon (*saṁmūrchchhita*) and of his subsequent awakening (*vibuddha*), and not of death.[45] According to this interpretation, 'Dāmodara-gupta was seriously wounded and fainted away, but though his wound appeared to be very serious, he ultimately regained consciousness.' The writer of the *Praśasti* poetically assumed that the revival was due to the pleasing touch of the heavenly damsels who had come to the battle-field to meet fallen warriors. The mean-

44 *HNI*, 114-15; R. K. Mookerjee, *Harsha*, 55.
45 *D. R. Bhandarkar Volume*, 180.

ing is not unreasonable, but cannot be regarded as certain. For it is equally possible to argue that it was a poetic fancy to describe death as swoon in order to emphasize the subsequent re-awakening in heaven. But whatever view we might take on this point, there ought not to be any doubt on the issue of the struggle. The poet clearly refers to the rout and discomfiture of the Maukhari army, and the victory of Dāmodara-gupta. Even assuming that he died in the battle, it does not necessarily imply a defeat, for apart from common sense, there are many historical instances where the victors died in the battle-field. So far, therefore, as the evidence of this inscription goes, we must assume that Dāmodara-gupta gained a great victory, though it must be an open question whether he survived it or not.

Dāmodara-gupta was succeeded by his son Mahāsena-gupta, probably in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. The Aphsad inscription refers to his victory over Susthita-varman, and its fame being sung on the banks of the Brahmaputra. There is no doubt that this Susthita-varman was the father of king Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa who is mentioned in *Harsha-charita* as an ally of Harsha-vardhana and is also known from two copper-plate grants. It is thus clear that Mahāsena-gupta successfully invaded the kingdom of Kāmarūpa and probably advanced as far as the Brahmaputra river. In view of the later alliance between Bhāskara-varman and Harsha, it is not unreasonable to assume that such an alliance between the kings of Kāmarūpa and the Maukharis had come into existence earlier. In that case the invasion of Kāmarūpa by Mahāsena-gupta may be regarded merely as an episode in the long-drawn struggle between the Later Guptas and the Maukharis.

But in spite of his initial success Mahāsena-gupta seems to have fared badly in the end. As already noted (p. 185), the Maukhari king Śarva-varman exercised sway over a part of Magadha. Supratishṭhita-varman, who succeeded his father Susthita-varman on the throne of Kāmarūpa, claims that he and his brother Bhāskara-varman defeated the forces of Gauḍa, after their father's death, while they were still young.[46] It appears that Mahāsena-gupta was simultaneously attacked by the Maukharis from the west and the king of Kāmarūpa in the east. He at first obtained some successes against the latter and advanced as far as the Brahmaputra, but then the success of the Maukharis in the west forced him to retreat or to divert his main attention to the west. The king of Kāmarūpa now reaped the full advantage of the situation and defeated the forces of Mahāsena-gupta who probably lost all the fruits of his victory. In the west the Maukharis

46 Cf. the Doobi C. P. grant of Bhāskara-varman, *EI*, XXX, 287.

achieved conspicuous success and conquered some territories in Western Magadha comprising at least a part of the Shahabad district.

The situation of Mahāsena-gupta was critical enough, but it was rendered desperate by internal discord. For there can be hardly any doubt that it was during his reign that Śaśāṅka founded an independent kingdom in Gauḍa. As he is also known to have ruled over Magadha, it is likely that he usurped the power and authority of Mahāsena-gupta in his eastern territories.

The almost complete debacle of Mahāsena-gupta after his early victory might have also been due, at least partly, to foreign invasions. The Chālukya king Kīrtti-varman, who ruled from A.D. 567 to 597, is said to have defeated the kings of Aṅga, Vaṅga, and Magadha. How far it is a vain boast or a real claim based on facts, it is difficult to say. But if he really led an expedition to Eastern India, Mahāsena-gupta was most likely his adversary who suffered defeat and lost much of his power as a result.

According to Tibetan chronicles, Srong Tsan, the king of Tibet, who ruled between A.D. 581 and 600, led a victorious campaign to 'Central India', an expression which usually denotes Bihar, but is also sometimes applied to U.P.[47] The adversary of the Tibetan king was therefore probably either Mahāsena-gupta or his rival, the Maukhari Avanti-varman. In case it was the latter, we get a satisfactory explanation of the triumph of Mahāsena-gupta which enabled him to carry his victorious arms as far as the Brahmaputra. But it is more likely that the adversary was Mahāsena-gupta whose defeat at the hands of the Tibetan king probably enabled the Maukhari Avanti-varman, and Supratishṭhita-varman of Kāmarūpa to wrest from him the fruits of his earlier victory. The two foreign invasions supply a satisfactory explanation not only of the discomfiture of Mahāsena-gupta but also of the internal dissension or revolt in Magadha raised by Śaśāṅka. After the loss of his eastern territories Mahāsena-gupta seems to have taken shelter in Malwa.

We learn from Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harsha-charita*[48] that one day king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar addressed Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana as follows:

> 'My dear sons, I have appointed to wait upon your highnesses the brothers Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta, sons of the Mālava king, inseparable as my arms from my side; they are men found by frequent trials untouched by any taint of vice, blameless, discreet, strong and comely. To them your highnesses also will show a consideration not enjoyed by the rest of your dependents.'

47 Levi, *Nepal*, II, 147 ff.
48 Tr. by Cowell, 119-20.

Later, Bāṇabhaṭṭa tells us that Kumāra-gupta, the elder brother, was about 18 years in age.

It is generally held that the two princes of Malwa were sons of Mahāsena-gupta.[49] For the Aphsad inscription specifically associates Mādhava-gupta, son of Mahāsena-gupta, with Harsha. This identification raises several problems, the most important of which is the position of the two princes in the court of Thāneśvar. It has been suggested that Mahāsena-guptā, the mother of Prabhākara-vardhana, was a sister of Mahāsena-gupta, and after his death his sons deprived of their kingdom were protected by their relative, the king of Thāneśvar.[50] Although the similarity of names is no evidence of relationship, such a presumption cannot be said to be altogether unwarranted. But the language used by Bāṇa shows a clear inferiority in the status of the two princes *vis-à-vis* the two sons of Prabhākara-vardhana, which would be more in keeping with a conquered or feudatory ruler than with a relation enjoying equal status. One can easily gather from the preliminary address put in the mouth of the king that he regarded the two princes as servants of his sons rather than as friends or relations. Later, when the two princes came to the royal presence, they 'bowed from afar till their four limbs and heads touched the ground', and on receiving instructions to wait upon Rājya-vardhana and Harsha, saluted them 'by swaying their heads again and again to the earth'. 'Rājya-vardhana and Harsha, on their part, saluted their father', or, in other words, did not return the salute of the two princes of Mālava. In spite of the affectionate or cordial treatment that they received, the Mālava princes were clearly dependents, though they were shown 'a consideration not enjoyed by the other dependents', as the king directed.

The fact that Kumāra-gupta and his brother are described as sons of the king of Mālava is the principal argument in favour of the view that the Later Guptas were rulers of Mālava, rather than of Magadha. But the history of Mahāsena-gupta, as reconstructed above, is also not in conflict with the epithet 'King of Mālava' applied to him. In either case it remains to be explained why his sons were forced to take shelter as humble refugees and dependents in the court of Thāneśvar. That their father was dead and Mālava was lost to them admits of no doubt, but we cannot trace the course of events that led to it. There are some grounds to believe that king Deva-gupta, of whom we shall hear a great deal more hereafter, was ruling in Mālava. It is not improbable that he belonged to the royal family and usurped the throne after the death of Mahāsena-gupta. But we

49 *PHAI*, 512. Basak does not accept this view (*HNI*, 124-25).
50 Hoernle in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 561; *HNI*, 125.

also know that Mālava had other enemies about this time. As we shall see later (Ch. VIII), the Maitraka king Śīlāditya I of Valabhī, who ascended the throne in or not long after A.D. 590, conquered a considerable portion of Western Malwa, and Ujjayinī, the capital of Mālava, was held by the Kalachuri king Śaṅkaragaṇa in the year A.D. 595. It is not unlikely that the struggles with these powers were the main causes that led to the discomfiture of Mahāsena-gupta in the east, and ultimately the loss of the whole of Mālava in the west.

Perhaps Prabhākara-vardhana himself took advantage of the confusion in the kingdom of Mālava to invade it. He is described in the *Harsha-charita* as an 'axe to the creeper of Mālava's glory',[51] and this evidently implies a victorious campaign against Mālava. Whether he went to help Mahāsena-gupta (or his dethroned heir) against his internal and external enemies, or was urged by lust of conquest and gave the final death-blow to the power of the Later Guptas by conquering the last remnants of their kingdom and capturing the two young princes, it is difficult to say. The latter hypothesis would be in full accord with the status of the two Mālava princes in the Thāneśvar court. But there are two circumstances which support the former view. In the first place, the king Prabhākara-vardhana described the two princes as 'inseparable as my arms from my side', and also bestowed high encomiums on them while introducing them to his sons. Secondly, it has been casually mentioned in *Harsha-charita* that 'Kumāra was anointed by Harsha.'[52] This most probably refers to the consecration of Kumāra-gupta[53] as king by Harsha. This is hardly surprising, for we know from the Aphsad inscription that Mādhava-gupta, the other brother, was certainly crowned as king, and the reference to Harsha in that record hardly leaves any doubt that he owed his position to the favour of that Emperor.

It is thus not an improbable assumption that when Mālava was invaded by foreign enemies, and also probably torn asunder by internal discord, Mahāsena-gupta appealed for help to Prabhākara-vardhana, probably related to him by marriage. The latter advanced with his army and obtained some successes, but could not save either Mahāsena-gupta or his kingdom. He, however, rescued the two sons of Mahāsena-gupta and brought them with him. There they remained

51 Tr. by Cowell, 101.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 76.

53 Kumāra was another name of Bhāskara-varman, but as he was already the king of Kāmarūpa, the question of his consecration does not arise. Kumāra may also refer to the son of Harsha-vardhana as is hinted at by the commentator Śaṅkara. But this is not very likely as he is not known to have been succeeded by his son. Kumāra-gupta might have been consecrated to the throne of Mālava after the death of Deva-gupta or to the throne of Magadha after it was conquered by Harsha.

as attendants of Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana till the kingdom of Magadha or Mālava was restored to them.

Appendix to Section II (The Later Guptas)

THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE LATER GUPTAS

The earliest inscription of this dynasty that we possess belongs to the reign of Āditya-sena. That he and his successors ruled in Magadha admits of no doubt, for their records have all been found in South and East Bihar. This does not necessarily mean that the seven kings that preceded Āditya-sena also ruled in the same region, though that would be the most natural presumption, not lightly to be set aside until positive evidence is found to the contrary. Some indirect evidence may also be cited in support of this natural presumption. We know that two kings of this dynasty fought with the Maukharis, and another had a prolonged struggle with the rulers of Kāmarūpa. The Later Guptas, therefore, most likely occupied the territory between the kingdom of the Maukharis and Kāmarūpa; in other words, they were rulers of Gauḍa and Magadha. This is supported by the fact that in the Doobi inscription the sons of Supratishṭhita-varman, who was defeated most probably by Mahāsena-gupta, are said to have defeated the forces of Gauḍa after their father's death. It may be presumed that they were dealing with the same enemy who defeated their father, and we may therefore conclude that Mahāsena-gupta was regarded by them as lord of Gauḍa or an ally of the latter. We know of at least two instances in which the ruler of Magadha and Gauḍa has been referred to as Lord of Gauḍa; one is Śaśāṅka, and the other, the king of Gauḍa killed by Yaśo-varman. The reference to Gauḍa forces in the Doobi record may therefore imply that the king in question was the lord of both Gauḍa and Magadha, and this is applicable to Mahāsena-gupta. Thus, *prima facie*, there seem to be good grounds for the belief that the Later Guptas ruled in Magadha and the neighbouring region, at least from the time of Kumāra-gupta, the fourth king, and therefore also from the very beginning.

Two important considerations may, however, be urged against this view. In the first place we know that a small part of Magadha was in possession of the Maukhari kings Śarva-varman and Avanti-varman. This by itself does not prove much. For all we know, the Later Guptas might have been occupying the rest of the province. More important is the fact that we find Śaśāṅka ruling over Magadha and Gauḍa, and later, Pūrṇa-varman is mentioned by Hiuan Tsang as the ruler of Magadha. Thus, for at least a quarter of a century, the Later Guptas do not seem to have had anything to do with Magadha.

Secondly, the two princes Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta are called by Bāṇa, sons of the king of Mālava. As noted above, this Mādhava-gupta is most likely to be identified with the Later Gupta king of that name, though scholars are not unanimous about it. But even if we accept this view, which appears to be quite a reasonable one, it merely proves that Mahāsena-gupta was regarded as a ruler of Mālava. It proves nothing about the habitat of his predecessors.

The history of the Later Guptas, as reconstrued on pp. 194-97 *supra*, gives a reasonable explanation of Mahāsena-gupta's being called the king of Mālava, even though he and his predecessors had their seat of authority in Magadha. We know definitely that he had carried his victorious arms as far as the Brahmaputra river. If, therefore, we believe that he ruled in Mālava, we have to presume that he conquered the Maukharis and the Gauḍas, as otherwise he could not possibly have proceeded to the bank of the Brahmaputra river. Of these conquests there is not the least evidence. On the other hand, if we suppose that the Later Guptas, who inherited the dominions of the Imperial Guptas, had their centre of authority in Magadha and Gauḍa, but also exercised suzerainty over Mālava, which was probably ruled by a collateral branch, we get a natural explanation of the known facts. Mahāsena-gupta fought with his two enemies on either side, viz the Maukharis on the west and the Varmans of Kāmarūpa on the east. Although he scored some initial successes against the latter, the simultaneous fight with the Maukharis, the defection of Śaśāṅka, and probably some foreign invasions, made his position untenable, and he had to take shelter in Mālava. There also fortune did not favour him. He probably met with an ignominious end, and his two sons had to seek the protection of the court of Thāneśvar. This reconstruction cannot be proved in all details, but seems to be a reasonable hypothesis. It also satisfactorily explains why Mādhava-gupta was placed by Harsha on the throne of Magadha, rather than that of Mālava, for naturally a dispossessed king is restored to his ancestral kingdom. It is also to be considered why if Mādhava-gupta was the first king of his dynasty to rule Magadha, and all his predecessors had ruled in Mālava, not even the slightest reference to it should have been made in the Aphsad inscription, which gives the names of his six predecessors. It has been argued by H. C. Raychaudhuri that Hiuan Tsang mentions Pūrṇa-varman as the occupant of the throne of Magadha, but does not say a word about Mādhava-gupta or his father in connection with Magadha.[54] But the same question may be asked even if we hold that the Later Guptas ruled in Malwa. For Hiuan Tsang does not refer to the Later Guptas in con-

54 *JBORS*, 1929, p. 652.

nection with any state in Malwa, although he mentions the conquest of W. Malwa by Śīlāditya of Valabhī and refers to a number of States in E. Malwa ruled over by Brāhmaṇa rulers. Thus while no definite conclusion is possible in the present state of our knowledge, we must admit that there are no adequate grounds against the natural presumption that Magadha was the home of the Later Guptas.

III. BENGAL

We had occasional glimpses into the political condition of Bengal in connection with the history of the Guptas. Probably a part of Bengal was included within the original kingdom of the Guptas (p. 8), and it is almost certain that North and West Bengal formed an integral part of the Empire of Samudra-gupta. East and South Bengal, known as Samataṭa, was at first a feudatory frontier State (p. 43), but later formed an integral part of the Gupta Empire, as we find it in the time of Vainya-gupta (p. 87).

The difference in the political status of the two parts of Bengal was no mere accident. They really formed, not only about this time but also for many centuries later, two distinct political and geographical entities, known as Gauḍa and Vaṅga. It would be convenient, therefore, to describe the history of each separately.

1. *Vaṅga*

Vaṅga, as a geographical and tribal name, goes back to remote antiquity.[55] Roughly speaking, it denoted the whole of Eastern and Southern Bengal, though occasionally its western boundary extended beyond the Hooghly or Bhāgīrathī river. In the course of time we come across other geographical expressions such as Samataṭa and Harikela, which were sometimes used as synonyms of Vaṅga though often treated as distinct entities. The extent of each of these names, used in the restricted sense, varied in different ages. Generally speaking, Samataṭa denoted the Tippera and Noakhali districts; Harikela, the adjoining region to the north, and Vaṅga the rest of East and South Bengal. But later, we find a new name Vaṅgāla which was distinguished from Vaṅga and comprised a part or whole of South Bengal.[56]

In the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudra-gupta, as well as in Hiuan Tsang's account, we find the name Samataṭa and not Vaṅga, though the latter occurs in the Meharaulī Pillar inscription of Chandra. As noted before (p. 43) Samataṭa is included among those frontier States whose rulers 'paid taxes, obeyed orders and performed obeisance in person to the great Emperor' Samudra-gupta. The exact boundary

55 *HABM*, 8, 25.
56 *Ibid.*, 10-12.

of Samataṭa in the Gupta Age is not known, but it would appear from the detailed description of Hiuan Tsang that in his time the kingdom included a part of Central Bengal, such as Backerganj and Faridpur in addition to Tippera and Noakhali districts. It is not unlikely, however, that Samataṭa denoted even a much wider area in the Gupta Age.

As in the days of the Delhi Sultanate, so also in the Gupta Age, East Bengal was the last to accept, and the first to rebel against, foreign domination. Although forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Samudra-gupta, Samataṭa or Vaṅga perhaps made a bold bid for freedom in the next reign. For if we are right in identifying Chandra of the Meharaulī Pillar inscription with Chandra-gupta II (p. 55), we must presume that the confederate hosts with whom he fought in Bengal represented the various petty States of Vaṅga combined in a last desperate effort to throw off the yoke of the Guptas. They failed, and their country was brought under the direct administration of the Gupta Emperors. This is proved by the Gunaighar grant of Vainya-gupta which shows that the administration of the Tippera district was being carried on in the name of Vainya-gupta in the year A.D. 506-7 (p. 87).

But Vainya-gupta was perhaps the last of the Gupta family to rule over this province. For ere long we find an independent kingdom established in Vaṅga. Five inscriptions[57] discovered at or near Koṭālipāḍā in the Faridpur district, and one at Mallasārul[58] in the Burdwan district, testify to the existence of this kingdom. They refer to three rulers named Gopachandra, Dharmāditya and Samāchāradeva, all of whom assumed the title *Mahārājādhirāja*. The last is also known from his gold coins[59] and a seal found at Nālandā.[60]

Gopachandra was perhaps the earliest of these three rulers.[61] He had under him a vassal chief named *Mahārāja* Vijayasena who issued the Mallasārul grant under his own seal. This chief is probably identical with Vijayasena, the *Dūtaka* of the Gunaighar grant, who is

57 These are: (1-2) Two grants of Dharmāditya, and (3) one grant of Gopachandra, all published in *IA*, XXXIX, 193-216, (4) one grant of Samāchāradeva (*EI*, XVIII, 74) —all found at Koṭālipāḍa, and (5) the unpublished grant of Samāchāradeva found at Kurpala. The views of R. D. Banerji (*JPASB*, VI, 429; VII, 289; X, 425) and Dr. Bloch (*ASIAR*, 1907-8, p. 256) that these grants are spurious are no longer maintained by any scholar.

58 *EI*, XXIII, 155.

59 *JPASB*, XIX, Num. Suppl., 54.

60 *MASI*, No. 66, p. 31.

61 Pargiter, who edited the Koṭālipāḍā plates, regarded Dharmāditya as earlier than Gopachandra. But the grounds urged by him are very weak, and he wrote before the discovery of the Mallasārul plate which supports the contrary view (cf. *HABM*, 42-44).

described as *Mahā-pratīhāra Mahā-pīlupati, Pañchādhikaraṇoparika* and *Mahārāja Śrī Mahāsāmanta*. If this identification be accepted, we must presume that Vijayasena, who already held high offices under Vainya-gupta in A.D. 607, rose to still higher distinction under Gopachandra which enabled him to issue land-grants under his own seal though acknowledging the suzerainty of *Mahārājādhirāja* Gopachandra. We must also infer that there was no long interval of time between the two grants, and Gopachandra therefore must have come to the throne in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. The contrast between his title *Mahārājādhirāja* and that of *Mahārāja* assigned to Vainya-gupta in the Gunaighar grant perhaps indicates the recent changes in the political status of Vaṅga.

Not much is known of either Gopachandra, or the two other rulers, Dharmāditya and Samāchāradeva. Their relationships, if any, and even the order of their succession remain obscure. That they belonged to the same family may be reasonably inferred from the employment of common officers and the close resemblance in the phraseology of the Koṭālipāḍā plates. Their independent status and great power are proved by their title *Mahārājādhirāja* and by the gold coins of Samāchāradeva. Those coins closely imitate the Gupta types and bear the legend *Narendrāditya*, evidently a title assumed by Samāchāradeva in imitation of the Gupta Emperors.[62]

The lands granted by the Koṭālipāḍā copper-plates were situated in the district (*Vishaya*) called Vāraka-*maṇḍala* in Navyāvakāśikā, which was evidently the name of the bigger division, probably *bhukti*, though this term is not actually used. This division must have comprised a large part of the deltaic region including Faridpur district. The Mallasārul grant refers to Vardhamāna-*bhukti* and the villages granted by it have been located in the Burdwan district. The independent kingdom of Vaṅga comprised Southern and Central Bengal and a portion of Western Bengal extending to the border of Orissa.[62a]

The grants of Gopachandra, Dharmāditya, and Samāchāradeva bear respectively the dates 18,[63] 3, and 14. It is significant that they use the regnal years and not the Gupta Era. It may be held that the three kings ruled between A.D. 525 and 575.

It is probable, however, that there were a few other kings ruling after them. A large number of gold coins have been found in different parts of East Bengal, notably at Sabhar (Dacca district) and Koṭālipāḍā. These are rude and debased imitations of the Gupta coins and

62 *Ibid.*, 65, f.n. 32.

62a *Ibid.*, 42-43.

63 The date was read as 19 by Pargiter who edited the plate. It is read as 18 by Basak (*HNI*, 191) and D. C. Sircar (*SI*, 357).

are rarely found outside East Bengal. The names of two kings, Pṛithuvīra and Sudhanyāditya, have been read on these coins. These, and others whose names are not recorded on the gold coins, probably ruled in Vaṅga after the three kings mentioned above.[64]

How or when the kingdom of Vaṅga came to an end cannot be ascertained. The invasion of the Chālukya king Kīrtti-varman, referred to above (p. 195), might have had something to do with its downfall, but more probably it succumbed to the powerful kingdom of Gauḍa under Śaśāṅka.

2. *Gauḍa*

The antiquity of Gauḍa, as the name of a city, can be traced back to the days of Pāṇini.[65] As the name of a country it is referred to in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*[66] and Vātsyāyana's *Kama-sūtra*.[67] But we have no evidence that it came into political importance till the end of the Gupta period.

Reference to the Gauḍas as a political power is met with for the first time in the Hārāha inscription of Īśāna-varman (p. 183). In a passage, whose precise meaning is not easy to understand, the Maukhari king claims to have defeated the Gauḍas, who either lived on the sea-shore or were forced by this defeat to remove there. It is clear, therefore, that Gauḍa at this time extended up to the sea-coast or was not very far from it. As we shall see later, Gauḍa certainly comprised a part of West Bengal including Murshidabad district, early in the seventh century A.D. We may therefore hold that Gauḍa in the middle of the sixth century A.D. corresponded roughly to the present Burdwan division in West Bengal.

As we have seen above, Gopachandra ruled over at least a part of this region in the second or third decade of the sixth century A.D. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Īśāna-varman fought with him and forced him to fall back upon the deltaic region to the east of the Bhāgīrathī. This is probably the basis of his claim that he forced the Gauḍas to the sea-shore. As already mentioned, the Later Gupta king Jīvita-gupta I is also said to have fought on the sea-shore. It is probable that he also fought against the independent kingdom of Vaṅga. As suggested above, it is probable that the Later Guptas and Maukharis both fought on behalf of the Gupta Emperor against the rulers of Vaṅga who had recently shaken off his suzerainty.

64 For these coins, cf. *CCIM*, I, 120, 122; *CGD*, cvi-cvii, 154. *JPASB*, XIX, Num. Suppl., 58; XXI, Num. Suppl., 1.

65 VI, 2, 99-100.

66 Book II, 13.

67 Benares Edn., 115, 294.

Gauḍa next comes to our view towards the close of the sixth century A.D. For, as mentioned above, Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa is said to have repulsed the forces of Gauḍa. As has already been suggested (p. 194) the reference here is probably to the army of Mahāsena-gupta. In that case, in the second half of the sixth century A.D. the Later Guptas must have ruled Gauḍa, which then included also North Bengal, known separately as Puṇḍra and Varendra.

Thus after the fall of the Gupta Empire, two independent kingdoms of Gauḍa and Vaṅga rose in Bengal, the former corresponding roughly to Northern and Western, and the latter to Southern and Eastern Bengal. The Later Guptas probably continued to rule over Gauḍa till the end of the reign of Mahāsena-gupta whose tragic end has been described above (p. 197).

Shortly after this, Gauḍa became a very powerful kingdom under Śaśāṅka. Of his early life we know little that can be regarded as certain. A seal-matrix cut in the rock of Rohtasgarh records the name of 'Śrī-Mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅka', i.e. the illustrious great vassal-chief Śaśāṅka.[68] If, as is generally held, this Śaśāṅka be the same person as the king of Gauḍa, we must presume that he was originally only a feudal chief.[69] His suzerain was probably Mahāsena-gupta who must have conquered this region, if he were not already in possession of it, in the course of his campaign against Kāmarūpa. But some scholars hold that he was a vassal of the Maukhari kings who, as we know, ruled over a portion of Magadha.[70]

Be that as it may, Śaśāṅka soon established an independent kingdom in Gauḍa with Karṇasuvarṇa as his capital,[71] and rapidly extended his kingdom. He ruled over Magadha, conquered Orissa, and established his supremacy over the Śailodbhava dynasty of Koṅgoda in Ganjam district.[72] The copper-plate grants show that at first both Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapore district) and Utkala (Orissa) were governed by Śaśāṅka's officers. Later, both these provinces were ruled by a *Sāmanta Mahārāja* under Śaśāṅka's suzerainty, as was Koṅgoda further south. Thus, for the first time in history, Gauḍa emerges as a powerful kingdom extending over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. It is

68 *CII*, III, 284.

69 There are not adequate grounds for the belief, held by some, that Śaśāṅka was also known as Narendra-gupta and connected with the Guptas.

70 *IHQ*, XII, 457.

71 Hiuan Tsang has left a short account of the kingdom of Karṇasuvarṇa ruled over by Śaśāṅka (*HTB*, I, 210; II, 201.) This place may be definitely located, in view of the recent archaeological excavations near Rangamati in Murshidabad district, West Bengal, *EI*, XXXVII, 27. For exact location, cf. *HABM*, 7.

72 This is known from three copper-plate grants, two found in Midnapore district (*JRASBL*, XI, 1) and one in Ganjam (*EI*, VI, 143).

probable, though by no means certain, that Vaṅga also formed a part of Śaśāṅka's dominions.

It appears that along with the possession of the territory of the Later Guptas, their rivalry with the Maukharis also passed on to Śaśāṅka. For we find him entering into an alliance with the king of Mālava and proceeding against Kanauj. The incidents of this campaign are referred to in *Harsha-charita,* but in a manner that is very vague and unsatisfactory. In broad outline it may be stated as follows:[73]

The king of Mālava invaded the Maukhari kingdom, killed Graha-varman, seized Kanauj, and imprisoned queen Rājyaśrī, the daughter of king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar. This is said to have taken place on the very day on which the death of Prabhākara-vardhana was rumoured at Kanauj. It is difficult to say whether this was a mere coincidence, or the invasion was deliberately planned by the king of Mālava on hearing of the serious illness of Prabhākara-vardhana. In any case his success was complete, and the Maukhari kingdom lay prostrate before him.

As soon as this news reached Thāneśvar, Rājya-vardhana, who had just ascended the throne on the death of his father, marched with a hastily collected army of 10,000 horse to the rescue of his sister. The king of Mālava also advanced against him, but was defeated and a large part of his army captured by Rājya-vardhana.

In the meantime Śaśāṅka had arrived at Kanauj and thence presumably marched against Rājya-vardhana. For we are told that before Rājya-vardhana could reach Kānyakubja or established contact with his sister Rājyaśrī, he was killed by Śaśāṅka.

Both Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang state that Rājya-vardhana was treacherously murdered by Śaśāṅka. But they give very different accounts of the circumstances leading to the murder. Harsha-vardhana's own inscriptions merely say that Rājya-vardhana met with his death in the house of his enemy owing to his adherence to a promise (*satyānurodhena*).[74] This discrepancy raises grave suspicion about the charge of treachery brought against Śaśāṅka by Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang, both of whom were highly prejudiced against him and refer to him in most opprobrious terms.

It may be presumed that neither Rājya-vardhana nor the king of Mālava knew at the time of their engagement in that deadly conflict that Śaśāṅka was near at hand. For otherwise the king of Mālava would probably have delayed his operations till the arrival of the ally. Rājya-vardhana's small army was already reduced by the cam-

73 *HC,* Tr., 173-78, 224, 250-51.
74 *EI,* I, 67; IV, 210.

paign against the Mālava ruler.[75] It is not unlikely, therefore, that Rājya-vardhana, surprised by Śaśāṅka, was actually defeated by him or forced to capitulate in circumstances which ultimately led to his death. Such an event would naturally give rise to various conjectures about his death, specially among his partisans. An apt illustration is furnished by the various accounts of the manner in which the Roman Emperor Valerian became a captive of the Sassanian king Shapur in A.D. 260.[76] In any case, while the death of Rājya-vardhana may be regarded as a fact, the circumstances leading to it cannot be ascertained, and the treachery imputed to Śaśāṅka can by no means be regarded as historically correct.[77]

The death of Rājya-vardhana took place in A.D. 606. The subsequent career of Śaśāṅka is but imperfectly known. Epigraphic evidence shows that even in A.D. 619 he was acknowledged as suzerain by the Śailodbhavas of Koṅgoda (Ganjam district). It appears from the statements of Hiuan Tsang about the so-called atrocities of Śaśāṅka in Magadha, that Koṅgoda formed a part of his dominions up to the time of his death, which probably took place not long before A.D. 637, the date of the Chinese pilgrim's visit to this region.

Although Harsha-vardhana, who succeeded his brother Rājya-vardhana, made a grim resolve to punish Śaśāṅka, there is no definite evidence of any trial of strength between the two. The only reference to a conflict, between them is contained in a passage in *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*,[78] which possesses very little value as a source of historical information (p. 100). It is said that Harsha marched against Puṇḍra, the capital of Śaśāṅka,[79] and defeated him, but returned, having (or *not having*, according to another interpretation) been honoured in that kingdom of the barbarians. This somewhat enigmatic passage shows that even if Harsha had led any campaign against Śaśāṅka, he did not gain any conspicuous success. This is corroborated by the Ganjam inscription of Śaśāṅka, dated A.D. 619 and the fact that Harsha did not conquer Magadha before A.D. 641.[80]

75 Bhaṇḍi met Harsha with the Mālava king's whole force and equipage and the huge booty taken from him by Rājya-vardhana (*HC*, Tr., 225). As Bhaṇḍi, and not the whole army, is mentioned as accompanying it, it appears that Bhaṇḍi was sent in advance with the captives and spoils of the war with the Mālava king. This would have still further reduced the army of Rājya-vardhana.

76 *Cambridge Ancient History*, XII, 135.

77 For a detailed discussion of this point, cf. *HABM*, 51-52, 58-63.

78 VV, 719-726. It is interesting to note that according to this passage Rājya-vardhana was killed by a king of the *Nagna* caste.

79 Puṇḍra evidently stands for Puṇḍravardhana, now represented by Mahāsthāngarh near Bogra (N. Bengal). But according to Hiuan Tsang Śaśāṅka's capital was Karṇa-suvarṇa, in Murshidabad district.

80 See Ch. X.

Hiuan Tsang has referred to many acts of intolerance and oppression against the Buddhists perpetrated by Śaśāṅka,[81] who was a Śaiva and evidently no patron of Buddhism. But it is difficult to accept as true all the accusations of the Chinese pilgrim, particularly as his accounts display throughout a strong bias against Śaśāṅka, and his stories are full of supernatural and miraculous elements.

In spite of the declamations of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang, we must regard Śaśāṅka as a great figure in history. He was the first historical ruler of Bengal to establish an empire and carry his victorious arms as far as Kanauj, and even beyond. He finally liquidated the Maukharis who were age-long rivals of the Gauḍas, and paved the way for that political greatness of Bengal which reached its maturity in the age of the Pālas. He gave the stamp of international recognition and prestige to Gauḍa which came to be an honoured name for the whole of Bengal and a symbol of its unity and culture.

IV. KĀMARŪPA

The Upper Brahmaputra valley or Assam proper was known in ancient days as Kāmarūpa and Prāgjyotisha. The latter name occurs in both the epics, but its geographical situation does not always tally with Assam, it being placed in the western or northern part of India.[82] There is no doubt, however, that Kāmarūpa and Prāgjyotisha became well known names of the Assam valley.[83]

Little is known of the early history of Kāmarūpa. The inscriptions of the seventh century A.D. and later periods refer to three kings—Naraka, his son Bhagadatta, and the latter's son Vajradatta, who figure prominently in the *Mahābhārata* and some Purāṇas. The first is a mythological hero, born of the god Nārāyaṇa and the earth,[84] while the other two fought with the Pāṇḍavas. It is said that after this dynasty had ruled for three thousand years Pushya-varman became king of Kāmarūpa.

As we get a regular list of succession from Pushya-varman, he may be regarded as the first historical king of Kāmarūpa. The genealogy of this family is given as follows:[85]

81 *HTW*, II, 43, 92, 115, 116.

82 *Rām.*, IV, 30-32; *Mbh. Sabhā*, Ch. 26, v. 9; Aśvamedha P. chs. 74-75.

83 *Raghuvaṁśa* (IV, 81, 83) refers to both the names. For full discussion of these points, cf. Barua in *IHQ*, XXIII, 200 and B. C. Law in *JUPHS*, XVIII, 43.

84 The story of Naraka is given in detail in the *Kālikā Purāṇa*. It is generally held that the dynasty of Naraka represents a non-Aryan ruling family (Barua, *loc. cit.*).

85 The genealogy is given in the Nadhanpur grant of Bhāskara-varman (*EI*, XII, 73), Nālandā seal (*MASI*, No. 66, pp. 69-70), and partially in the *Harsha-charita* (Tr., p. 217). There are slight differences in the names of kings in the different sources, as shown within brackets and also significant differences in titles, as noted

1. Pushya-varman
2. Samudra-varman *m.* Dattadevī
3. Bala-varman *m.* Ratnavatī
4. Kalyāṇa-varman *m.* Gandharvavatī
5. Gaṇapati-varman *m.* Yajñavatī
6. Mahendra-varman *m.* Suvratā
7. Nārāyaṇa-varman *m.* Devavatī
8. Mahābhūta (or Bhūti)-varman *m.* Vijñānavatī
9. Chandramukha-varman *m.* Bhogavatī
10. Sthita (Sthiti or Sthira)-varman *m.* Nayanadevī
11. Susthita (Susthira)-varman *m.* Śyāmādevī

12. Supratishṭhita-varman   13. Bhāskara-varman.

King Bhāskara-varman, with whom the list ends, was a contemporary of Harsha-vardhana in the fourth decade of the seventh century A.D. The eighth king Mahābhūta-varman is known from an inscription to have flourished about the middle of the sixth century A.D. The accession of Pushya-varman, the first king, may thus be placed in the fourth century A.D. It is remarkable that the names of the second king and queen agree with the Gupta Emperor Samudra-gupta and Empress Dattadevī. Such coincidences are so rare in history that we may well believe that these names were adopted by way of homage to the great Gupta Emperor. As a matter of fact Kāmarūpa is included in the list of frontier tributary States of the Gupta Empire under Samudra-gupta (p. 43). It would not be unreasonable to conclude therefore that Pushya-varman owed his throne to the Imperial Guptas and named his son and daughter-in-law after the great Gupta Emperor and Empress as a mark of respect, reverence and submission.[86]

later. The Nālandā seal gives the names of the queens of Nos. 10 and 11 respectively as Nayanaśobhā and Dhruvalakshmī.

86 An analogous instance is furnished by the Gaṅga king Ayya-varman, a feudatory of the Pallava king Siṁha-varman, who named his son Mādhava Siṁha-varman.

On the other hand a royal seal of the dynasty, found at Nālandā,[87] gives the title *Mahārājādhirāja* to the first four kings. But the remaining kings are merely given the epithet *Srī*, without even any royal title, although two of them are said to have performed Aśvamedha sacrifices. It is difficult, therefore, to base any conclusion about the political status of the first four kings on the title *Mahārājādhirāja*, and we may reasonably regard some, if not all, of them as feudatories of the Gupta Empire. They seem to have been petty chiefs, as their dominions did not comprise even the whole of the Assam valley. For Ḍavāka, which is mentioned as a separate tributary State in the Allahabad *praśasti*, has been located in the valley of the Kapili river in Nowgong district (p. 43). It has been inferred from a Chinese account that this kingdom existed in A.D. 428.[88]

Kāmarūpa was thus a comparatively small kingdom owing allegiance to the Gupta Empire. Nothing is known of its first six rulers beyond the names. The seventh, Nārāyaṇa-varman,[89] is said to have performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices. This probably marks the formal renunciation of the yoke of the Imperial Guptas.[90] The eighth king Bhūti-varman or Mahābhūta-varman is the earliest ruler of the family known from his own record—an inscription[91] engraved on a rock in the Kapili valley, dated in the year 244 (or 234), evidently of the Gupta Era, and equivalent to A.D. 564 or 554, and mentioning his performance of an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Curiously enough, this Aśvamedha is not mentioned in the Nālandā seal, though two other kings of the family are credited with its performance. Bhūti-varman who flourished about A.D. 560 was not only master of the Kapili valley, representing the ancient Ḍavāka kingdom, but extended his power further south over the whole of the Surma valley, for we know from a copper-plate grant of Bhāskara-varman that lands, situated in Sylhet,[92] were originally granted to more than 200 Brāhmaṇas by Bhūti-varman, and as the charter was lost, these were re-granted by Bhāskara-varman. Bhūti-varman may thus be regarded as a very

87 See n. 4 above.

88 *JRAS*, 1920, p. 227.

89 According to N. K. Bhattasali, it was his father Mahendra-varman who performed the sacrifices (*IHQ*, XXI, 22, 145).

90 Bhattasali's suggestion (*IHQ*, XXI, 24-25) that the kings of Kāmarūpa were the Pushyamitras (mentioned in the Bhitarī ins., *supra*, p. 69) who brought about the downfall of the Gupta Empire does not deserve any serious consideration and has been ably refuted by D. C. Sircar (*IHQ*, XXI, 143) and Jagannath (*IHQ*, XXII, 112).

91 *JARS*, VIII, 33. *Bhāratavarsha* (Bengali monthly), 1348, B.S., p. 83, where the date has been read as 234. But D. C. Sircar reads the date as 244 (*IHQ*, XXI, 143).

92 This is very likely but there is no definite evidence in support of it. Some have located the lands granted in North Bengal. Cf. *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. III, the Classical Age, 1962, p. 91, n. 3; *JRASBL*, I, 419.

powerful ruler who extended the boundaries of Kāmarūpa so as to include the present district of Sylhet in the south. The western boundary of his kingdom was probably the Karatoyā river which separated Kāmarūpa from Bengal in historical times.[93]

It is related in the *Harsha-charita* that king Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa sent an envoy ~~to~~ Harsha's court. The genealogy of the royal family, described by the envoy, after referring to the mythical kings Naraka etc., begins with Bhūti-varman.[94] This also indicates that the greatness of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa began from his reign. His father had probably thrown off the yoke of the Guptas and, taking advantage of the political chaos caused by the invasion of Yaśodharman and the downfall of the Gupta Empire, Bhūti-varman set up a strong and powerful kingdom in the east.

Kāmarūpa evidently continued to retain this position, for the grandson of Bhūti-varman also performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices. The next king Susthita-varman is referred to in highly flattering terms in the *Harsha-charita*. He is given the title *Mahārājādhirāja* while even Bhūti-varman is just called a *Mahārāja*. Unfortunately the only fact known about him is his defeat at the hands of the Later Gupta king Mahāsena-gupta on the bank of the Lauhityā or the Brahmaputra (p. 194). It is probable that the Later Guptas regarded themselves as the legitimate heirs of the Gupta Empire and fought with both the Maukharis and the kings of Kāmarūpa because these had revolted against that empire. It is also not unlikely that there was a diplomatic alliance between the Maukharis and the kings of Kāmarūpa. But, as noted above (p. 194), Mahāsena-gupta's success was shortlived. For Susthita-varman's son Supratishṭhita-varman claims to have defeated the Gauḍa forces soon after the death of his father while he was still young.[95] Supratishṭhita-varman was succeeded by his younger brother Bhāskara-varman whose history will be related in connection with Harsha-vardhana.

V. NEPAL

At the beginning of the fourth century A.D. the Lichchhavi dynasty was ruling in Nepal. A long list of kings of this dynasty is furnished by the *Vaṁśāvalīs*, or local chronicles of Nepal,[96] and a short account

93 According to *Kālikā Purāṇa* and *Yoginī-Tantra* the Karatoyā forms the western boundary of Prāgjyotisha. The Chinese text *T'ang-Shu* mentions the river Ka-lo-tu as the boundary between Puṇḍra-vardhana and Kāmarūpa. Watters (*HTW*, II, 187) identifies it with the Brahmaputra, but it clearly corresponds to the Karatoyā.

94 *HC*, Tr., 217.

95 Doobi copper-plate of Bhāskara-varman, *JARS*, XI, Nos. 3-4, p. 33.

96 These *Vaṁśāvalīs* are modern compositions but are evidently based on ancient texts.

of the dynasty is given in the Paśupatināth Temple inscription[97] of the eighth century A.D. According to this record Supushpa, a remote descendant of Lichchhavi, the eponymous hero of the clan, was born at Pushpapura (i.e. Pāṭaliputra) and presumably ruled there. Twenty-three kings (whose names are not given) reigned after him, and then followed Jayadeva. After another interval, covering the reigns of eleven kings (also unnamed), flourished Vṛishadeva whose successors are regularly named.

The names of Vṛishadeva and his five successors, as given in this late inscription, are also found in the *Vaṁśāvalīs*. Most of them are also known from contemporary records. They may, therefore, be regarded as historical personages, and the history of the Lichchhavi dynasty in Nepal may be said really to begin with them for all practical purposes.

An inscription engraved on a pillar in the Chaṅgu-Nārāyaṇa Temple,[98] near Kathmandu, in the reign of Mānadeva, the great-grandson of Vṛishadeva, is dated in *Samvat* 386. Unfortunately, no specific era is mentioned, and different scholars have referred the year to the Vikrama *Samvat*,[99] Śaka, or Gupta Era,[100] or even to a special Lichchhavi era commencing in A.D. 110.[101] On palaeographic grounds the first half of the fourth century A.D. (the date of the record according to Vikrama *Samvat*) seems to be too early, and the beginning of the eighth century (according to Gupta Era) is undoubtedly too late and out of the question. The choice therefore lies between the Śaka and the special era, according to which the date of the inscription will be either A.D. 464 or 496, and the former may be provisionally accepted.[102] As we have another inscription of Mānadeva, dated *Samvat* 413 (A.D. 491),[103] his reign-period may be assumed to lie between A.D. 460 and 500.

Starting from this chronological datum, we may fix provisionally the date of the foundation of the Lichchhavi dynasty in Nepal. According to the *Vaṁśāvalīs* nineteen kings preceded Mānadeva, and allotting an average reign of 20 years to each, the accession of the first king

97 Pandit Bhagawanlal Indraji and Dr. G. Bühler: 'Inscriptions from Nepal' (*IA*, IX, 163 ff), No. XV.

98 Lévi, *Le Nepal*, Vol. III. Ins. No. I. The text given by Indraji and relied on by Basak (*HNI*, 242) is incomplete.

99 Indraji and Bühler, *IA*, xiii, 411.

100 Fleet, *CII*, III, Introd. 177.

101 Lévi (*op. cit.*, III, 49, 73) propounds the theory of the special Lichchhavi era, and advocates Śaka era as an alternative. Basak refers the early dates to Vikrama Samvat and the later ones to Gupta Era (*HNI*, 274),

102 For a full discussion, cf. *JAS*, 1959, Vol. I, No. I, 47-49.

103 *IA*, IX, 167.

falls about A.D. 80. If we accept the different account given in the Paśupatināth Temple inscription, we may fix the reign of Jayadeva I, on the same principle, at about A.D. 160. As the twenty-three unnamed kings who are said to have preceded him, as well as Supushpa, probably belong to the domain of mythology rather than history, we may regard Jayadeva I as the first historical king and the founder of the dynasty. We may therefore regard the Lichchhavi dynasty in Nepal as having been founded in the first or second century A.D.

A Lichchhavi dynasty must therefore have been ruling in Nepal at the time when the Gupta dynasty rose in power. As noted above, we hardly know anything of this dynasty till we come to the reign of Vṛishadeva, the great-grandfather of Mānadeva, whose reign may be placed in the second half of the fourth century A.D. Whether Kumāradevī, the queen of Chandra-gupta I belonged to the Lichchhavi dynasty of Nepal, or was connected with it in any way, we cannot say. It is very unlikely, because the Allahabad *Praśasti*, which mentions with pride the Lichchhavi lineage of Samudra-gupta, also refers to Nepāla as one of the frontier States whose rulers rendered homage and paid taxes to the great Emperor (p. 43).

In accordance with the scheme of chronology adopted above, the ruler of Nepāla, who submitted to Samudra-gupta, may be taken to be Vṛishadeva or his predecessor. Of Vṛishadeva and his two successors we get some information from the Changu-Nārāyaṇa and Paśupati Temple inscriptions.

Vṛishadeva was a devoted Buddhist[104] and built several *vihāras*. The Changu-Nārāyaṇa Temple inscription refers to his son and successor Śaṁkaradeva as a great and prosperous king who won victories in many battles. According to the *Vaṁśāvalīs* (or local chronicles), Śaṁkaradeva made pious endowments to the Paśupati Temple and founded a monastery at Patan. His son and successor Dharmadeva is also described as a powerful king and, according to the chronicles, dedicated a large statue of Śiva's bull to the Paśupati Temple and founded Svayambhūnātha.

An element of human interest is added to the history of Nepal of this period by the Changu-Nārāyaṇa Temple inscription of Mānadeva, the son and successor of Dharmadeva. It describes graphically the situation following the death of Dharmadeva. The queen Rājyavatī, bent upon following her husband on the funeral pyre, made a long farewell address to her son Mānadeva. The latter bowed down to his mother's feet and said with tears in his eyes: 'My life would not be worth living without you and so I shall die before you follow my father to heaven.' This dissuaded the queen from her pious

104 This information is supplied by the late Paśupati Temple inscriptions.

resolve, and she and her son performed the funeral rites of the deceased king.

Mānadeva next asked for the consent of his mother for undertaking a military expedition in the east, in order to crush his foes and install chiefs who were subservient to him. He argued that it was by such military exploits and not by penances or austerities, that he could discharge his debt to his father. His mother granted permission. Mānadeva proceeded to the east and successfully carried out the two tasks. The whole account seems to convey the idea that Dharmadeva had died in the midst of a protracted struggle with refractory feudal chiefs in the east, and that Mānadeva completed the task left unfinished by his father. Mānadeva next proceeded on a victorious campaign in the west. Having heard of the wicked conduct (*dushṭa-charitra*) of a vassal chief, he addressed his maternal uncle as follows: 'If he does not voluntarily submit, he must be forced to do so. This very day you cross the river Gaṇḍakī and I shall follow your force with hundreds of horses and elephants.' He was as good as his word, and inflicted a heavy defeat upon the guilty Malla chief.

Apart from throwing interesting side-light on the personality of king Mānadeva, his inscription enables us to get an idea of the political status of the kingdom of Nepāla about this time. It is clear that although the Nepal valley proper, i.e. the narrow region round Kathmandu in the Bagmati valley, was the centre of the Lichchhavi kingdom, the kings had already begun the process of expansion, so familiar in later days, by subduing the wild hill tribes both in the east as well as in the west. These tribes, as ever, chafed at the yoke of the central authority, and it required constant vigilance and strong military expeditions to keep them under control. The kingdom of Nepal had already extended to the Sapta-Gaṇḍakī in the west and probably to the Sapta-Kuśī in the east, and though it had not reached its present limits, perhaps the vision of such a united kingdom of the hill tribes of the Himālayan region had already taken shape in the mind of its rulers.

The inscriptions of Mānadeva, the earliest epigraphic records so far discovered in Nepal, do not refer to, or contain any indication of, Gupta suzerainty. It is almost certain that either Mānadeva, or more probably one of his predecessors, had freed the country from the yoke of the Guptas. For, excepting the statement in the Allahabad *Praśasti*, there is no other evidence that the Gupta Emperors had any hold over this almost inaccessible hilly region. Mānadeva's reign coincides with the period of the decline of the Gupta Empire, and his aggressive martial spirit may be, at least in part, a consequence of this change in the political condition of India. The dominance of

the Brahmanical religion and of the Sanskrit language which forms the characteristic feature of the Gupta Age is noticeable also in Nepal about this time.

Mānadeva was the first great king of Nepal. The royal palace Mānagṛiha, from which successive rulers of Nepal issued royal charters, and the monastery called Māna-deva *Vihāra* or Māna-*vihāra* in records of later times were possibly named after and constructed by him. The coins called Mānāṅka and the cult of the goddess Mānesvarī in Nepal are also associated with him by some scholars. His name probably survives today in Nepal in the name of a clan of the Ṭhākuris called Māna.

Nothing is known of Mahīdeva, the son and successor of Mānadeva. We have an inscription, dated *Samvat* 435 (A.D. 513) of Vasantasena,[105] who is undoubtedly the same as Vasantadeva, the son and successor of Mahīdeva. The inscription records a grant of land, but does not contain any information of historical value.

The period following the death of Vasantadeva is very obscure. Our two principal sources of information, viz the *Vaṁśāvalīs* and the Paśupati Temple inscription, do not agree either with each other, or with the other known epigraphic records. There seems to be some truth in the account of one of the *Vaṁśāvalīs* according to which Nepal was conquered by the Ābhīras from the successor of Vasantadeva, and after three of their chiefs had ruled in succession, the Lichchhavi king Śivadeva drove away the invaders and regained the ancestral kingdom.

We have a number of inscriptions of king Śivadeva[106] who flourished towards the close of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century A.D. Curiously enough, in all his records most undue prominence is given to *Mahāsāmanta* Aṁśu-varman, who is described as 'one who has destroyed the power of all enemies by his heroic majesty, obtained by victories in numerous great wars, and whose brilliant fame, gained by the trouble he took in properly protecting the subjects, pervades the circle of the quarters'.[107] At first the orders were issued by the king, at the instance, or on the advice, of this great baron, and then by the latter with the approval of the king. Still later Aṁśu-varman, though called *Mahāsāmanta*, himself issued orders from the Kailāsakūṭa palace without any reference to Śivadeva who lived in the palace called Mānagṛiha.

It is obvious that about the beginning of the seventh century A.D. Nepal had something like a dyarchical form of government which

105 *HNI*, 245, gives the name as Vasantadeva.

106 *HNI*, 249 ff.

107 Indraji, No. V; *HNI*, 249.

prevailed there till very recent times. The legitimate king, who lived in Mānagṛiha palace, enjoyed no real power or authority which was exercised by Aṁśu-varman who fixed his headquarters in a different palace.

We can even trace the broad stages which led to this state of things. It appears that Aṁśu-varman first distinguished himself in some military campaigns which protected the subjects and saved the State from a great peril, possibly caused by the Ābhīras who had conquered Nepal. Aṁśu-varman gained fame and popularity by expelling the hill tribes that had been in occupation of Nepal for three generations, and gradually established his supremacy in the kingdom. Though he thus overshadowed the king, at first, he tolerated Śivadeva's nominal authority, but in the course of time he threw off the mask and stood forth as the real ruler in the kingdom. The king was suffered to live in his old palace and enjoy ceremonial honours, but he ceased to exert any power or prerogative.

VI. ORISSA

The history of Orissa during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. is shrouded in mystery. It is no doubt very curious that no reference is made to Orissa in the Allahabad *Praśasti* of Samudra-gupta. That great conqueror seems to have avoided it in his advance to the South, but there are good grounds to believe that it formed a part of the great Gupta Empire.[108] But soon after the fall of that Empire, we find the Māna and Śailodbhava dynasties ruling respectively in the northern and southern part of Orissa.

1. *The Mānas*

The origin of a Māna ruling family is briefly referred to in an inscription engraved on a rock in the Hazaribagh district.[109] Once upon a time, so runs the story, when Ādisiṁha was king of Magadha, the merchant Udayamāna and his two brothers, also merchants, went on business from Ayodhyā to Tāmralipta. Having made plenty of money they started home, and on their way stayed at a village (near the place where the inscription is engraved). While they were there, the king Ādisiṁha came to the forest near the village on a hunting expedition. He asked the people of the locality to give him an '*avalagaka*' (or *avalagana*) the meaning of which is obscure. The villagers thereupon went to Udayamāna and requested him to satisfy the king. Udayamāna did send an *avalagana* to the king who was highly pleased and bestowed a diadem on him. The grateful villagers

108 *Ante*, Ch. V, Section 4. *EI*, XXVIII, 79.
109 *EI*, II, 343.

also requested him to become their *rājā*. With the king's approval he accepted their offer and long ruled the village happily and vigorously. At the request of two other neighbouring villages he sent his two brothers to rule over them, as his subordinates.

After narrating this incident the inscription tells us that the people of former days had this eulogy engraved in order to show the relationship between the chiefs of the three villages so that they might live in peace and harmony. The inscription is not dated but probably belongs to the eighth century A.D. The foundation of a kingdom in and around the Hazaribagh district by Udayamāna therefore goes back to a much earlier time, though it is not possible to assign any precise date.

In the latter part of the sixth century A.D. the greater part of Orissa was ruled by a Māna family. We learn from the Patiakella grant, dated 283,[110] and the Soro plate, dated 260,[111] that Śaṁbhuyaśas was ruling over northern and southern Tosalī, which comprised nearly the whole of Orissa from Balasore to Purī district. The first record explicitly refers to the sovereignty of the Mānas. Whether Śaṁbhuyaśas was the suzerain ruler of the Māna family, or merely a subordinate ruler governing Orissa on behalf of the Mānas, cannot be definitely determined.[112] But in any event, there is no doubt that the Mānas exercised suzerainty over Orissa in the year 283, and possibly also in the year 260, though the Mānas are not referred to in the inscription of that date. These two years should be referred to the Gupta Era, and Śaṁbhuyaśas was therefore ruling between A.D. 580 and 603. As noted above, this region was conquered by Śaśāṅka not long after the last mentioned date, and it is therefore probable that he seized it after defeating the Mānas.

We do not know whether this Māna family was descended from, or connected in any way with, Udayamāna, but this seems to be very probable. It is also likely that modern Mānbhum in Santal Parganas

110 *EI*, IX, 285.

111 *EI*, XXIII, 198.

112 The Patiakella grant begins by saying that Śri-Śaṁbhuyaśas was ruling in the year (two hundred) and eighty-three during the sovereignty of the Māna family. It then refers to Śivarāja, who issued the grant, as having obtained his present position through the favour of *Parama-devatādhidaivata Śrī Parama-bhaṭṭāraka*. Now these titles, indicating suzerainty, may refer to Śaṁbhuyaśas or to some other ruler to whom Śaṁbhuyaśas himself was also subordinate. In the Soro plate Śaṁbhuyaśas is referred to as *Parama-daivata-va(ba)ppa-pādānudhyāta* which has been translated as 'meditating on the feet of his father who was (*to him*) like a great divinity'. This shows that Śaṁbhuyaśas inherited the position from his father. Most probably Śaṁbhuyaśas was the suzerain ruler of the Māna family. He ruled directly over Uttara-Tosalī i.e. northern part of Orissa (Soro grant) while South Tosalī was governed by Śivarāja (Patiakella grant).

was named after the Mānas. Another royal family bearing the same name flourished in Magadha in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D.[113] We have also reference to Siṁhamāna, probably a king, whose daughter was married by the Kara king Śāntikara II.[114]

2. *The Śailodbhavas*

The Śailodbhavas[115] ruled in Southern Orissa with Koṅgoda as their capital. They traced their origin to Lord Śailodbhava, who was created by Brahman, apparently out of a rock. In his family was born Raṇabhīta, whose son Sainyabhīta was the lord of the earth.[116] The Khurda[117] and Ganjam[118] copper plates give an account of three kings of this dynasty, viz Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta I, his son Ayaśobhīta, and the latter's son Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II.[119] It may be easily inferred that Sainyabhīta Mādhavarāja I was the son of Raṇabhīta, and laid the foundation of the greatness of the family. Nothing is, however, known of him and his son. Of Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II we have two records. The first, the Ganjam copper plate, is dated in the year A.D. 619 and refers to *Mahārājādhirāja* Śaśāṅka as his overlord. In the second or the Khurda copper plate there is no reference to Śaśāṅka. The king issues the grant from the *jayaskandhāvāra* (camp of victory) of Koṅgoda and claims to exercise sovereignty over the whole of Kaliṅga. A comparison of these two plates, added to what has already been said above regarding Śaśāṅka, enables us to reconstruct the history of the family somewhat as follows:

About the middle of the sixth century A.D. Raṇabhīta founded a small principality in Southern Orissa. His task was probably facilitated by the political chaos that followed the downfall of the Gupta Empire. About the same time the Mānas also took advantage of the situation to conquer a large part of Orissa. At first the Mānas were more powerfull and probably asserted their supremacy over the Śailodbhavas, for Śaṁbhuyaśas ruled over South Tosalī, which comprised the territory where Koṅgoda was situated. It is, of course, not unlikely that Śaṁbhuyaśas ruled only over a part of South Tosalī, and the Śailodbhavas, who ruled over the rest of it, were not subject to his authority. In any

113 *EI*, II, 332.
114 Talcher plate of Śivakaradeva, II, 18-19.
(B. Misra, *Orissa under the Bhauma kings*, 44)
115 For a full discussion of the history of this dynasty, cf. *JAHRS*, X, 1 ff.
116 Cf. Buguda Pl., *EI*, III, 41.
117 *JASB*, LXXIII, Part I, 284.
118 *EI*, VI, 143.
119 There are slight discrepancies of names in the two plates, but we can safely establish the genealogy (*JAHRS*, X, 1).

event, both the Mānas and the Śailodbhavas had to submit to Śaśāṅka towards the beginning of the seventh century A.D. The Śailodbhava king Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II recognized the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka till at least A.D. 619 when the Ganjam plate was issued. But some time later, probably after the death of Śaśāṅka, he ruled as an independent king, and perhaps also conquered at least a part of Kaliṅga. It is, however, not at all likely that he got permanent possession of any considerable part of Kaliṅga proper. For the Gaṅgas who ruled over Kaliṅga at this time regularly called themselves lords of Kaliṅga, while the Śailodbhavas are usually styled lords of Koṅgoda.

The capital city of Koṅgoda was situated on the Salimā river which has been identified with the rivulet called Sali in 'Banpur State' (Purī district) which falls into the Chilka lake. The Koṅgoda-maṇḍala or the kingdom of the Śailodbhavas may be roughly defined as being bounded on the east by the Chilka lake and Bay of Bengal, on the south by the Mahendragiri mountain, and on the west by the hills which form the western boundary of the Kalahandi State. The northern boundary perhaps varied from time to time and probably stretched at times to the lower valley of the Mahanadi river.

CHAPTER NINE

WESTERN INDIA IN THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D.

I. MAITRAKAS OF VALABHĪ

THE RISE OF THE MAITRAKA DYNASTY was coeval with that of the Maukharis and the Later Guptas. Some scholars think that the name Maitraka is a Sanskritized form of Mehr or Mehar. Fleet[1] suggests that the original name was 'Mihira' which again is the Sanskritized form of the Persian *Mihr,* the Sun; that the Maitrakas were but an allied tribe, if not a branch, of the Hūṇas, who were Sun-worshippers; and that both the Maitrakas and the Hūṇas migrated to India about the same time in the middle of the fifth century A.D. In the opinion of Jackson,[2] Bhaṭārka, the founder of the Maitraka dynasty, belonged to the Gurjara tribe, and the modern Gujarat had been known as such since its occupation by the Maitrakas. But all these views must be regarded as hypothetical.

Valabhī, modern Wala, eighteen miles north-west of Bhavnagar, Kāthiāwār, was the capital of the Maitrakas.[3] It was situated in ancient Saurāshṭra.[4] The kingdom of the Maitrakas, in their palmy days, included Ujjain, Mandasor, Rewakantha, Broach, Vadnagar, and Junāgaḍh. The king Dhruvabhaṭa of this family, according to Hiuan Tsang, was a Kshatriya,[5] which may be taken to be the caste of the Maitrakas.

Epigraphic records are unanimous in stating that Bhaṭārka was the founder of the Maitraka dynasty. The bards relate an interesting story in connection with the origin of this dynasty.[6] A Gupta king sent his son Kumārapāl-gupta for the conquest of Saurāshṭra. After its

1 *IA,* XV, 361.

2 *BG,* I, Pt. I, 85, 87.

3 A large number of inscriptions of the Maitrakas was issued from Valabhī. *Udayasundarī-kathā* (GOS, N. XI, 3) relates that Valabhī was the capital (*rājadhānī*) of (Maitraka) Śīlāditya.

4 An inscription, dated A.D. 1079, states that Valabhīpura was the capital of Saurāshṭra, *EI,* II, 222.

5 *Life,* 149; *HTW,* II, 246.

6 *IA,* II, 312.

conquest Chakrapāṇi, son of Prāndat, one of the āmīrs of the Guptas, was appointed its governor. Vāmanasthalī was the headquarter of this province. Kumārapāl-gupta's father lived for twenty-three years after the annexation of that province. Kumārapāl ruled for twenty years. His son and successor Skanda-gupta was of weak intellect. Skanda-gupta's *senāpati* was Bhaṭṭāraka of the Ghelotī race. Bhaṭṭāraka's forefathers, who were rulers of Ayodhyā Nagarī, were overthrown by the Guptas. Taking advantage of the weak rule of his master Bhaṭṭāraka proceeded to Saurāshṭra, and established there a kingdom of his own. He founded the city of Valabhī, and asserted his supremacy over Kachchha, Lāṭa, and Mālava. At this time the Guptas were overthrown by the foreign invaders.

Kumārapāl-gupta, Chakrapāṇi, and Prāndat of the bardic tale may be taken to correspond, respectively, to Kumāra-gupta I, Chakrapālita, and Parṇadatta of the Junāgaḍh rock inscription[7] of Skanda-gupta and Bhaṭṭāraka is undoubtedly Bhaṭārka. How far the above story relating the early activities of Bhaṭārka is true cannot be verified. It seems quite likely that Bhaṭārka, originally a general of the Gupta Emperor, was appointed Governor of Gujarat and made the office hereditary. His successors took advantage of the decline of the Gupta power to establish an independent kingdom. Though the Palitana plate of Dhruvasena,[8] dated A.D. 525, relates that '*Senāpati* Bhaṭakka (Bhaṭārka) obtained the glory of royalty by the strength of the array of devoted hereditary servants and friends', it is significant that neither Bhaṭārka nor his successor assumed royal titles.

Bhaṭārka had four sons, Dharasena I, Droṇasiṁha, Dhruvasena, and Dharapaṭṭa. Dharasena I, who succeeded his father, is designated in the inscriptions of his successors as *Senāpati*.[9] Dharasena's successor Droṇasiṁha was the first to assume the royal title. His own inscription, dated A.D. 502, states that the 'king' (*Mahārāja*) was devoted to Paramabhaṭṭāraka.[10] A later inscription,[11] dated A.D. 525, reports that 'Droṇasiṁha's anointment to the kingdom was performed by the paramount sovereign (*paramasvāminā*) in person'. As noted above (p. 83) Droṇasiṁha's overlord was almost certainly the Gupta Emperor. It is clear, therefore, that the Maitrakas still acknowledged the imperial power of the Guptas.

Droṇasiṁha was succeeded by his younger brother *Mahāsāmanta*

7 *CII*, III, 58.

8 *EI*, XI, 108.

9 Cf. *Senāpati* Pushyamitra of the Śuṅga Dynasty (*Modern Review*, Oct. 1924, p. 431; *IHQ*, 1929, p. 602); a leader of the Yaudheya republic called *Mahārāja* and *Mahāsenāpati*, *CII*, III, 252; *Mahāsenāpati* Maukhari Bala, *EI*, XXIII, 52.

10 *EI*, XVI, 17.

11 *Ibid*, XI, 108.

Mahārāja Dhruvasena I. Dates of his inscriptions, almost all of which were issued from Valabhī, range between A.D. 525 and 545. They also refer to the overlord (*Paramabhaṭṭāraka*) of the king. It cannot be said definitely whether Dharapaṭṭa, the youngest brother of Dhruvasena I, ruled at all. Dharapaṭṭa's son Guhasena claims to have succeeded to the throne of Dhruvasena I, but Guhasena's son Dharasena II mentions Dharapaṭṭa as a *Mahārāja*.

From the time of Guhasena we no longer find any reference to the overlord. Evidently, the Gupta Empire finally collapsed shortly after A.D. 545, and the Maitrakas henceforth ruled as independent sovereigns, both in name and in fact. *Mahārāja* Guhasena's inscriptions are dated A.D. 559 and 567, and those of his son, *the Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja* Dharasena II, contain dates ranging from A.D. 571 to 589. The Sorath plate[12] of Guhasena, dated A.D. 559, mentions him as a devotee of both Śiva and the Sun. But the Bhavnagar plate[13], dated A.D. 567, calls him a *Paramopāsaka*, i.e. a lay disciple of the Buddha. Dharasena II is only referred to as a devotee of Śiva in his inscription.[14] Both the father and the son made donations for the maintenance of the Buddhist establishments.

The chiefs of the Gārulaka dynasty of Palitana, in Kāthiāwār, were vassals of Dharasena II and his predecessors. The earliest known chief of this family was the *Senāpati* Varāhadāsa I, who flourished in the early years of the sixth century A.D. He was succeeded by his son the *Sāmanta Mahārāja* Bhaṭṭiśūra, whose successor was his younger brother Varāhadāsa II. Varāhadāsa defeated the king of Dvārakā in battle. He was succeeded by the *Sāmanta Mahārāja* Siṁhāditya. A copper-plate inscription[15] of this chief, found at Palitana, records that he granted some lands in A.D. 574.

II. THE KALACHURIS

1. *The Early Kalachuris*

The Haihayas were an ancient race. They are mentioned in the Epics and the Purāṇas. The traditional capital of the Haihayas was Māhishmatī, generally identified with Mandhata on the Narmadā in the Nimar district, Madhya Pradesh, or with Maheshwar a little to the west of it. In the post-Christian era, the Haihayas also came to be known as the Kalachuris with other variant forms such as Kaṭachchuris and Kalatsūris. An era, the initial year of which falls in A.D.

12 *IA*, VII, 66.
13 *Ibid.*, VI, 207.
14 *ABORI*, IV, 38.
15 *EI*, XI, 16.

248-49, and which is definitely known to have been in use from the fifth century A.D., was known after the name of the Kalachuris. In later times the Kalachuris, ruling in the Madhya Pradesh and the Deccan, took pride in calling themselves 'lords of Kalanjara'. But the period when the Kalachuris were in possession of that famous fortress cannot be determined. There were several branches of the Kalachuri dynasty, the earliest of whom ruled over Mālava, Southern Gujarat and Khāndesh.

Kṛishṇarāja, the earliest known chief of this dynasty, was succeeded by his son Śaṁkaragaṇa, who issued a land-grant[16] from his camp at Ujjayinī in A.D. 595. It cannot be definitely said whether Mālava was part of his ancestral dominions or whether he conquered it and seized its capital for a short period only. Another inscription,[17] discovered at Sankhed in the former Baroda State, records the grant of lands in localities situated within 28 miles from Dabhoi.

Śaṁkaragaṇa was succeeded by his son Buddharāja some time before A.D. 602.[18] Two copper-plate inscriptions of Buddharāja's reign are known. One of them,[19] issued from the camp of Vai(Vi)diśā (Bhilsa) in A.D. 609, records that the king granted a village in the Vaṭanagara-*bhoga* which is identified with Vadner in the Nasik district. The second inscription,[20] issued from the camp at Ānandapura (Vadnagar) in A.D. 610, records that the king granted a village in the Bharukachchha-*vishaya* (Broach). Buddharāja's kingdom thus comprised the whole of Mālava, central and southern Gujarat, Khāndesh and Nasik districts. Some time between A.D. 597 and 602 Buddharāja suffered a defeat at the hands of the Chālukya Maṅgaleśa of Bādāmi. The Nerur grant[21] mentions that Maṅgaleśa defeated Buddharāja, who maintained elephant and cavalry forces and had a treasury, thus testifying to Buddharāja's military and financial resources.

The *Harsha-charita* of Bāṇa relates that Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta, who were made associates of the princes Rājya-vardhana and Harshā-vardhana by the king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar, were the sons of the king of Mālava.[22] It is known from the Aphsad inscription that the father of Mādhava-gupta was Mahāsena-gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty.[23] It thus follows that Mahāsena-gupta was the king of Mālava, which, we know from various sources, included

16 *EI*, IX, 296.
17 *Ibid.*, II, 21.
18 *IA*, XIX, 7.
19 *EI*, XII, 30.
20 *Ibid.*, VI, 299.
21 *IA*, VII, 18.
22 *HC*, Tr., 19-21.
23 *CII*, III, 202 ff.

Avanti. Bāṇa, in his *Kādambarī*, describes the women of Ujjayinī and Vidiśā as the women of Mālava. The Paramāras (*c.* A.D. 812-1305), whose capitals were at Ujjayinī and Dhārā, were known as the rulers of Mālava. Two well-known lexicographers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, viz Yādavaprakāśa and Hemachandra, state that the term Mālava is synonymous with Avanti, in which was situated Ujjayinī.[24] It is thus apparent that Mahāsena-gupta was the ruler of Avanti, if not of all the territories up to Vidiśā or Bhilsa. As the Kalachuri Śaṁkaragaṇa was in possession of Ujjain in A.D. 595, he must have wrested it from Mahāsena-gupta. It is not unlikely that the Gupta king lost his life in the battle. This satisfactorily explains why the sons of Mahāsena-gupta accepted subordinate positions in the court of the Pushyabhūtis at Thāneśvar. The *Harsha-charita* relates that after the death of Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar (in *c.* A.D. 605) the king of Mālava killed the Maukhari Graha-varman, and threw the latter's queen Rājyaśrī, the sister of Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana, into the prison of Kanauj. He then marched towards Thāneśvar, but was on his way defeated by Rājya-vardhana. The inscriptions of Harsha-vardhana state that Rājya-vardhana defeated Deva-gupta and other kings. Some scholars think that this Deva-gupta is identical with the Mālava king, referred to in the *Harsha-charita*. But a careful analysis of the contemporary evidence seems to lead to a different conclusion. The inscriptions of Harsha make it clear that Deva-gupta was not the only adversary defeated by Rājya-vardhana in battle. The *Harsha-charita* discloses that, besides fighting the king of Mālava, Rājya-vardhana had also to fight with the Hūṇas. So it is not absolutely certain that Deva-gupta and the Mālava king are identical. As the Kalachuri Buddharāja was in possession of Mālava, Gujarat, and Khāndesh during this period, he may very reasonably be identified with the Mālava king, who fought with the Maukharis and the Pushyabhūtis.[25]

The last known date of Buddharāja is A.D. 610. The Kalachuri kingdom did not long survive his reign. Some time before A.D. 616 the Maitrakas of Valabhī took possession of the central and southern Gujarat, while Khāndesh passed into the hands of the Chālukya Pulakeśin II of Bādāmi.

III. THE HŪṆAS

1. *Early History*

From time immemorial the migrations of the hordes of nomadic tribes in Central Asia have profoundly affected the history of the

24 *IHQ*, XIX, 222.
25 *JBORS*, XIX, 399. For a different view, cf. Ch. VIII.

civilized nations of the West and South. The activities of these barbarians proved to be one of the decisive factors in the history of Rome during the last days of the Republic and the early centuries of the Empire, till the whole of the Western Empire passed into their hands and the Middle Ages in Europe began. In India the result of the migrations of two such tribes named the Yüe-chi and the Śakas has been discussed above. The Hiung-nu, whose attack on the Yüe-chi first set them in motion, were now themselves on the move. Under the familiar name of 'Huns' we find them on the slopes of the Ural and in the valley of the Volga in the second half of the fourth century A.D. Some time before A.D. 375 they destroyed the Gothic kingdom on the shores of the Black Sea from the Danube to the Don and occupied its territory. About A.D. 434 or 435 Attila became the leader of the Huns and soon made himself master of all the barbarian tribes living beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire. He levied tribute from Theodosius, the Roman Emperor of the East, and then marched against the Western Empire. Although defeated at the battle of Chalons in A.D. 451 by the Roman and Germanic troops led by Aetius, of barbarian descent, he invaded Italy early next year. The imperial forces were unable to arrest his progress and the Roman Emperor had to sue for peace offering an annual tribute. On his way back from Italy he died in A.D. 453.

Attila and the Huns made a deep impress on the imagination of the terrified peoples whom they had conquered. The Goths regarded these small, frail, frightful beings, who had nothing human but the faculty of speech, as offspring of impure spirits and witches. These nomadic peoples had no religion, and their only passion was massacre and plunder. The chronicles of the West have given a lurid account of their cruel and blood-thirsty deeds, which need not be repeated here.

The Huns who thus harried Europe with fire and sword represent only one section of these nomadic hordes who migrated west from the borders of China. Another section turned towards the Oxus and, though subject to the tribe called Joan-Joan for a time, became very powerful about the middle of the fifth century A.D., *i.e.* about the same time when Attila was knocking at the gates of Italy. This branch is referred to in the Greek accounts as White Huns, but is also called Ye-tha, Hephthalites or Ephthalites from the name of their ruler's family. From the bank of the Oxus these Huns invaded both Persia and India.[26]

26 The general account of the Hūṇas is based on the following authorities: (1) Chavannes, *Documents sur les Toukie Occidentaux*, 223 ff; (2) Sir Aurel Stein, 'White Huns and Kindred Tribes in the History of the Indian North-Western Frontier' (*IA*,

2. *The Hūṇas in India*

Although the Hūṇas carried on great depredations in India, and ultimately settled in this country in large numbers, it is not possible to present their history in the form of a connected narrative. We get isolated references to them which are mostly vague in character and do not enable us to trace their activities in a chronological order or even always associate them with definite localities.

The earliest reference to the invasion of the Hūṇas occurs in connection with Skanda-gupta, as mentioned above (p. 72). The full significance of his great victory over the Hūṇas can only be understood against the background of their activities and achievements in the Western Roman Empire almost about the same time. But for the success of Skanda-gupta, Northern India would perhaps have shared the same fate as befell Central Europe and Italy a few years before, and Persia a few years later.

We do not know where Skanda-gupta fought with the Hūṇas and what became of them after their defeat. It is not unlikely that being checked in India they turned their attention towards Persia. For we know that their king Akhschounwar defeated and killed the Sassanian ruler of Persia in A.D. 484. This raised their power and prestige to such an extent that by the end of the fifth century they established a vast empire with their chief capital at Balkh.

This empire extended as far as the Indus, if not beyond it, even before the end of the fifth century A.D. This can be gathered from the accounts of Sung-yun[27] who visited the region corresponding to modern N.W.F. Province (now W. Pakistan) and A.D. 520 as an imperial ambassador from China. Referring to Gandhāra he says:

> 'This is the country which the Ye-thas destroyed and afterwards set up a *tegin*[28] (prince or member of the royal family) to be king over the country; since which events two generations have passed. The disposition of this king (or dynasty) was cruel and vindictive, and he practised the most barbarous atrocities. He did not believe the law of Buddha, but loved to worship demons. Entirely self-reliant on his own strength, he had entered on a war

1905, pp. 73 ff). For the Hūṇa activities in India reference may be made to *The Hūṇas in India* by Dr. Upendra Thakur and the following articles, though many of the statements contained in them require modification or are palpably wrong: *IA*, XV, 245 ff; 346 ff; *IHQ*, III, 1 ff; *NIA*, IV, 86; V, 248. For Hūṇa coins cf. *JRASB*. 1894, Part I, 191 ff and also Ch. XXX below. For the antiquity of the Hūṇas and their activity in Iran cf. *Bhandarkar Comm. Vol.*, 65 ff.

27 *HTB*, I, xv ff, xcix ff.

28 Beal misunderstood this word, but the correct meaning was first pointed out by Marquart. Cf. Chavannes, op. cit.

with the country of Ki-pin (Kashmir), disputing the boundaries of their kingdom, and his troops had been already engaged in it for three years. The king has 700 war-elephants... The king continually abode with his troops on the frontier, and never returned to his kingdom.'

Thus in spite of the victory of Skanda-gupta the Hūṇas had fully established themselves in the north-west frontier of India in the last quarter of the fifth century A.D., if not earlier. It was inevitable that they would seize every opportunity to penetrate further into India, and such an opportunity probably offered itself after the death of Budha-gupta. For there are good grounds to believe that Toramāṇa, who conquered Mālava about the beginning of the sixth century A.D., was a leader of the Hūṇas.

Both Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula are known from their coins and inscriptions to have ruled over a considerable part of Western and Central India. The coins[29] have been found in Kashmir, as well as in the Panjab, Central India and neighbouring regions.

The coins of Mihirakula bear the legend *jayatu vṛisha* (may the bull be victorious) testifying to his devotion to God Śiva, also referred to in the Mandasor inscription as above. The coins of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula bear out what we know of their dominions from other sources.

The Gupta type of coins issued by Toramāṇa has the date—year 52. There has been much speculation regarding the interpretation of this date. Fleet suggested that this was the regnal year of Toramāṇa who began his reign in the Panjab. Some scholars regard the date as equivalent to year 252 of the Gupta Era. But both these views seem to be negatived by the discovery of similar dates, 54, 55 etc., on the coins of the Maukharis, which otherwise also closely resemble the coins of Toramāṇa. Cunningham held that either the year should be referred to the Śaka era with suppressed hundreds or to a special Hūṇ era.[30] None of these theories is free from difficulties and the question must for the present be left open.

As mentioned above Toramāṇa is referred to as *Mahārājādhirāja* in an inscription found at Eran (p. 89). Another inscription found at Kura[31] (Salt range in the Panjab) mentions *Rājādhirāja Mahārāja* Toramāṇa-shāhi-Jaū(vla). Some scholars regard the two as identical,

29 For the coins cf. Fleet in *IA*, XVIII, 225; Cunningham in *NC*, 1894; V. A. Smith in *JASB*, LXIII, 185, *CCIM*, 235, 265.

30 Thakur (op. cit., p. 118) accepts this view and, following M. Drouin, places the beginning of the era in A.D. 448.

31 *EI*, I, 239; *SI*, 398.

but this is denied by others.[32] Toramāṇa's son Mihirakula is known from an inscription found at Gwalior dated in the 15th year of his reign.[33] None of these inscriptions calls Toramāṇa or Mihirakula a Hūṇa or by any tribal name. But Sten Konow has inferred from the titles 'Shāhi-jaūvla' that Toramāṇa was probably a Hūṇa, for these titles are found on the coins of the Hephthalite kings. Toramaṇa's coins have also been taken to show that he was a Hūṇa, but this conclusion cannot be regarded as certain. For the coins which bear the name of Toramāṇa or a part of it, and can thus be definitely assigned to him, generally imitate the Gupta and Kushāṇa types, and only one type bears the Sassanian bust on the obverse. But though Toramāṇa was most probably a foreigner, he cannot be definitely regarded as a Hūṇa. For all we know he might be a Kushāṇa chief allied to the Hūṇas, and might be mistaken for a Hūṇa in India because the Hūṇas formed a considerable element in his forces.[34]

There is no doubt, however, that the Hūṇas carved out a great empire in India. This is proved by the statement in the Mandasor inscription (No. 70), quoted above (p. 93), that Yaśodharman conquered territories which did not obey the commands of either the Guptas or the Hūṇas. This statement altogether loses its force if a considerable part of Northern India had not accepted the suzerainty of the Hūṇas before the time of Yaśodharman.[35] Besides, Yaśodharman specifically states that the Hūṇas had conquered the Himālayan region, and that Mihirakula had submitted to him (*lit.* bowed to his feet). It is interesting to note that though the Mandasor inscription mentions both the Hūṇas and Mihirakula, it does not connect the two

32 Bühler held that they were different (*EI*, I, 239) but Cunningham (op. cit.), V. A. Smith (op. cit.) and Sten Konow (*IHQ*, XII, 531) regard them as identical. Cf. *SI*, IX, 398, n. 4.

33 *CII*, III, 162; *SI*, 400.

34 Sir Aurel Stein (op. cit.) and Jayaswal (*JBORS*, XVIII, 203) held that Toramāṇa was a Kushāṇa, and based this opinion on the title Shāhi-Jaūvla applied to him in the Kura inscription. Fleet also held the same view (*IA*, XV, 245). But it has been pointed out by Sten Konow that the coins of some Hephthalite kings, described by Herzfeld, bear the legend *Soho Zobol.* He admits that 'Shāhi' is of course the old title used by the Kushāṇas which had been adopted by the Hephthalites, and that it is possible and even probable that *jaūvla, zawolo,* was also borrowed from elsewhere. 'But', he adds, 'the collocation of these two titles in Hephthalite legends and in the Kura inscription shows that our Toramāṇa was in all probability a Hūṇa, as has usually been assumed, and not a Kushāṇa' (*IHQ*, XII, 532). Recently, K. G. Sankara has discussed this question (*NIA*, IV, 36); he contends that Toramāṇa was either a Kshatriya or a Parthian. His arguments have been ably controverted by Jagannath (*NIA*, V, 249) and Upendra Thakur (op. cit., 95-107) who hold that Toramāṇa was a Hūṇa.

35 It is, however, difficult to accept the statement that 'Toramāṇa took Magadha, Banaras and Kauśāmbī' (Upendra Thakur, op. cit., 112-25) which lacks evidence that may be regarded as even plausible.

in any manner, and might be even taken to imply a distinction between them. Be that as it may, this inscription definitely proves that the great period of the Hūṇa conquest was over, and the reign of Toramāṇa had ended and that of Mihirakula had at least begun, by the time that inscription was engraved, which could not have been far removed from A.D. 532-33 (p. 95).

The inscription also indirectly supports the general belief that Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were Hūṇa chiefs. Apart from their somewhat outlandish names, the real ground for this belief seems to be that while we have general references to Hūṇa conquests in India, we know of no other ruling chiefs in India in the first half of the sixth century A.D. who may be presumed to belong to a foreign and barbarous nationality. Although this is not a very convincing argument, still it has a great deal of force. Curious though it may be, the fact remains that on the one hand we possess very little definite information of the activities of the Hūṇas in India if we do not regard Toramāṇa and Mihirakula as their leaders, and, on the other, no great importance attaches to them without the Hūṇa invasion as the background of their history. For otherwise they might at best be regarded as rebellious chiefs or military adventurers who had a bright but short spell of success about the time of the Gupta decadence in the middle of the sixth century A.D.

A short account of Toramāṇa has been preserved in a Jaina work, the *Kuvalayamālā*, composed in 700 Śaka (A.D. 778).[36] Toramāṇa (written as Torarāya in one manuscript) is said to have enjoyed the sovereignty of the world, or rather of Uttarāpatha and lived at Pavvaiyā on the bank of the Chandrabhāgā (Chenab river). His *guru* Hari-gupta, a scion of the Gupta family, had another pupil named Deva-gupta who is described as a great poet and a royal sage (*rājarshi*) of the royal house of the Guptas. It appears from this account that Toramāṇa's capital was at Pavvaiyā on the Chandrabhāgā river and he was a devoted Jaina. It is interesting to note that coins of a king Hari-gupta have been found at Ahichhatra and we have probably reference to a prince Deva in a Gupta record.[37] It may also be noted in passing that the records of Harsha-vardhana refer to Deva-gupta as an adversary of Rājya-vardhana. This Deva-gupta is usually regarded as a king of Mālava who allied himself with Śaśāṅka, and probably belonged to the Later Gupta dynasty.[38]

The *Rājataraṅgiṇī* refers to both Toramāṇa and Mihirakula.[39]

36 *JBORS*, XIV, 28.

37 D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions* (1965), p. 281, n. 8.

38 *PHAI*, 514.

39 I, 289 ff; III, 102 ff.

Mihirakula is described in this work as one of the early kings of Kashmir. The only clue of his time is furnished by the fact that twelve kings intervened between the group of kings Hushka-Jushka—Kanishka and Mihirakula. This would place Mihirakula about three hundred years after Kanishka who is said to have reigned 150 years after Buddha's *nirvāṇa.* Mihirakula is not described as a Hūṇa, but it is said that after Hiraṇyakula and his son Vasukula had reigned, the land was overrun by the Mlechchha hordes and then his (Vasukula's) son Mihirakula of violent deeds, who was comparable to the god of destruction, became king. His kingdom included Gandhāra. He is said to have led an expedition to Ceylon and having defeated its king put a new ruler on the throne. On his way back he dispersed the rulers of Chola, Karṇāṭa and Lāṭa. Most horrible tales of his cruelty are told at length and the poet, justly surprised that the king had not been assassinated by the people in an uprising, ascribes his safety to the special protection of the gods.

King Toramāṇa flourished long after, about eighteen kings having intervened between him and Mihirakula. It appears that Toramāṇa and his elder brother Hiraṇya ruled conjointly after the death of their father Śreshṭhasena, called also Pravarasena. But, 'having forbidden the abundant coins struck by his brother, *dinnaras* struck in his own name were put in circulation by Toramāṇa'. This enraged the elder brother who placed Toramāṇa in confinement. During his prolonged confinement his queen gave birth to a son at a potter's house. This boy was called Pravarasena, and having grown up was preparing to incite an insurrection when his father Toramāṇa was released from imprisonment and died. Young Pravarasena then went abroad on pilgrimage. In the meantime his uncle Hiraṇya died, and Vikramāditya, the emperor of Ujjayinī, nominated Mātṛi-gupta to be the king of Kashmir. The poet evidently implies that Kashmir was subordinate to Vikramāditya, but does not stop to explain how this came about. Having heard of this encroachment, the young Pravarasena hastily returned to Kashmir. In the meantime Vikramāditya having died, Mātṛi-gupta abdicated the throne of Kashmir and spent the rest of his life as a mendicant at Benares. Pravarasena ascended the throne and made victorious military campaigns from the Eastern to the Western Sea, and from the confluence of the Ganges to the Saurāshṭra country. 'The lion-throne of his ancestors carried away by the enemy was then brought back by him from the city of Vikramāditya to his own city once more.' Moreover, he 'restored to his ancestral realm the son of Vikramāditya, Pratāpaśīla (also known as Śīlāditya), who had been expelled by his enemies'.

It is unnecessary for our present purpose to recount the various

activities of Pravarasena whom the poet holds up before us as one of the best and bravest of kings. An idea of his date may be gathered from the fact that five kings, belonging to three generations, ruled between him and Durlabha-vardhana who was the king of Kashmir when Hiuan Tsang visited the country (i.e. about A.D. 630). King Toramāṇa and his son may thus be placed in the first half of the sixth century A.D.

The account of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* can hardly be made to fit in with what we know of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula from other sources. While the stories of Mihirakula agree generally with those narrated by Hiuan Tsang, he is placed long before Toramāṇa, and his father's name is different. On the other hand Toramāṇa and his son, according to the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, flourished about the same time as the Hūṇa chief Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula, but the Toramāṇa of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* hardly ruled at all, and his son bore not only a different name but also an altogether different character. The coins also seem to indicate that Toramāṇa of Kashmir was different from the Hūṇa chief of Eran and Gwalior.[40] The reference to Vikramāditya of Ujjainī no doubt reminds us of Yaśodharman of Mandasor, and the victories of Pravarasena, those of Mihirakula, but it is impossible to make out a constructive picture which tallies with the known facts. On the whole, it appears that Kalhaṇa had before him a mass of vague historical tales, but without sufficient data to weave them into a proper historical narrative. No useful inference can therefore be derived from the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* regarding the history of Toramāṇa or Mihirakula.[41]

Hiuan Tsang gives a long account of Mihirakula in connection with the old city of Sākala, which was his capital.[42] 'Some centuries ago', we are told, 'Mihirakula established his authority in this town and ruled over India. He subdued all the neighbouring provinces without exception.' At first he took some interest in Buddhism and ordered that a Buddhist priest should meet him. The priests sent to him one who had been a servant in the king's household. Feeling deeply insulted at this he 'issued an edict to destroy all the priests through the five Indies, to overthrow the law of Buddha, and leave nothing

40 According to V. A. Smith (*CCIM*, I, 265) the Kashmir coins with the name of Toramāṇa, either in full or in an abbreviated form, were probably issued as early as the sixth century A.D., but continued in circulation until the fifteenth century, the pieces being struck not only by the king who bore this name but by a succession of rulers after him. Whether this king is identical with the chief whose coins have been found in Central India may be doubted. Cunningham (op. cit.) held that they were different.

41 Cf. Hoernle's dissertation on the subject in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 555.

42 *HTB*, I, 167. It is to be noted however that Hiuan Tsang gives the name as Mo-hi-lo-kiu-lo or Mihirakula (See Beal, I, 167 n. 6).

remaining'. The subsequent career of Mihirakula, as told by Hiuan Tsang, has been described above (p. 90).

Some interesting account of the Hūṇas has been preserved by Cosmas, surnamed Indicopleustes (Indian navigator),[43] an Alexandrine Greek, in his *Christian Topography* which was probably begun in 535 but not put in its final form till A.D. 547. In one place he says:

> 'Higher up in India, that is farther to the north, are the White Huns. The one called Gollas, when going to war, takes with him, it is said, no fewer than two thousand elephants and a great force of cavalry. He is the lord of India, and oppressing the people, forces them to pay tribute... The river Phison separates all the countries of India from the country of the Huns.'[44]

Cosmas narrates some stories about Gollas and clearly says elsewhere that the Phison is the same as the river Indus.[45] The date to which this account refers cannot be exactly determined, but may be placed between A.D. 525 and 535.

It is generally held that king Gollas in the above account refers to Mihirakula whose name is also written as Mihiragul. But although Gollas may be taken as equivalent to 'Gul', the last part of the name, there are difficulties in accepting this identification. For whereas according to Cosmas the Hūṇa king's chief seat of authority was to the west of the Indus, Mihirakula's capital was at Sākala (Sialkot) according to Hiuan Tsang. It is interesting to note that while according to both Sung-yun and Cosmas the chief seat of Hūṇa power was to the west of the Indus, according to Indian tradition, the capitals of both Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were in the Panjab.

It would also appear from the accounts of both Sung-yun and Cosmas that the Hūṇa kingdom proper lay in Gandhāra beyond the Indus. The further statement of the latter that Gollas, the Hūṇa king, is the lord of India and, oppressing the people, forces them to pay tribute, probably means no more than this that by occasional raids, like those of the Marathas at a later date, he compelled even distant chiefs, not directly under his authority, to pay tribute. This is supported by Sung-yun's statement that 'the king continually abode with his troops on the frontier'. Perhaps the cruel devastations which marked the Hūṇa invasion compelled the terrified peoples to buy peace and security by offering these tributes as indemnities. This view seems to be supported by the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman in which he claims suzerainty over territories 'which were not enjoyed

43 Tr. in English by J. W. McCrindle (London 1897).
44 *Ibid.*, 371-72.
45 *Ibid.*, 366.

(even) by the Gupta lords,[46] (and) which the command of the chiefs of the Hūṇas, that established itself on the tiaras of many kings, failed to penetrate'. The distinction in the phraseologies employed—enjoyment of territory in one case and issue of commands in the other—may have some real significance and point to the nature of supremacy in the two cases, as suggested above.

Even apart from the date of Cosmas's book, a comparison with Sung-yun's account leaves no doubt that Cosmas refers to a later state of things when the Hūṇa chief had become more powerful, and had spread his influence in India beyond the Indus. It is to be noted that according to Sung-yun the Hūṇa chief possessed only 700 elephants, while the number is raised to 2,000 by Cosmas. In A.D. 520, when Sung-yun visited the Hūṇa chief of Gandhāra, both Udyāna and Kashmir were independent of him, and it does not appear that he was a mighty lord of India.[47] The change which Cosmas notes must therefore have been accomplished between A.D. 520 and 535. This, then, must be regarded as the period of the great extension of the Hūṇa empire in India, and supplies an indirect evidence for the identification of Gollas and Mihirakula, as the latter is known from Indian records to have flourished about this time.

3. *General review*

A careful analysis of the facts mentioned above enables us to divide the history of the Hūṇas into a few broad stages. In the first period they advanced from the Oxus up to the Indus and probably crossed it, about the middle of the fifth century A.D. They were defeated by the Gupta Emperor Skanda-gupta, but established themselves in the territory between the Hindukush and the Indus. Although the gates of India proper were barred to them, or perhaps for that very reason, the Hūṇas spread their ravages to Persia and other neighbouring lands. By the end of the fifth century A.D. they had established their authority over a vast region. The Hūṇa empire about A.D. 500 extended from Khotan in the east to Persia in the west and comprised Tokharistan, Kabulistan and Zabulistan including the whole of the present N.W.F. Province.

46 Fleet translates *'Gupta-nāthā'* as the 'lords of the Guptas' (*CII*, III, 148), but 'Gupta lords' seems to be preferable.

47 Sung-yun describes the vast extent of the Hūṇa empire and notes its boundaries. It extended from Khotan in the east to Persia on the west. Beal's identification (p. xci) of the northern and southern boundaries with Mālava (or Valabhī) and Tīrabhukti is absolutely unfounded. Chavannes describes the extent of the Hūṇa empire in A.D. 500. It included Tokharistan, Kabulistan and Zabulistan, but no parts of India proper. Chavannes adds that, according to Chinese history (presumably the account of Sung-yun), the only Indian countries under the Hūṇas were Gandhāra and Chitral (op. cit. 224-25). Evidently he disregarded Beal's fanciful identifications.

So long as the Gupta Empire remained strong the Hūṇas probably did not invade India proper. But after the death of Budha-gupta, if not shortly before it, they renewed their depredations. Toramāṇa, who established his authority in the Panjab and then carried his victorious arms as far as Malwa, was most probably the Hūṇa leader who first established an extensive Hūṇa empire in India. His son and successor Mihirakula was also a great conqueror who imposed his suzerainty over a large part of India, extending at least as far as Gwalior in the east. As noted above (p. 90), according to a tradition preserved by Hiuan Tsang, even the Gupta Emperor Bālāditya was forced to pay him tribute. Indirect tribute is paid to his power and fame even by his redoubtable adversary Yaśodharman.

In his Mandasor inscription Yaśodharman claims that 'respect was paid to his feet by even that (famous) king Mihirakula whose head had never (previously) been brought into the humility of obeisance to any other save (the god) *sthāṇu* (Śiva), (and) embraced by whose arms the mountain of snow (i.e. Himālaya) falsely prides itself on being styled as inaccessible fortress'.[48] The reference to the mountain of snow probably indicates that Mihirakula was ruling over Kashmir and the adjoining regions. It may be remembered that Sung-yun also relates that the Hūṇa chief was fighting with Kashmir. It would appear that while Mihirakula was thus gaining territories and growing more and more powerful, Yaśodharman, an equally ambitious chief, had triumphed over the Gupta Emperor and carried his victorious arms far and wide. It was inevitable that two such military adventurers would come to a clash. Mihirakula was evidently defeated, but his kingdom or power was not destroyed. With the fall of Yaśodharman, which probably took place not long after, he again came to the forefront. But ere long he was again defeated and taken captive by Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya as has already been mentioned (p. 91). Although he was released, this defeat probably marked the end, not only of the triumphal career of Mihirakula, but also of the Hūṇa power in India.

As has been mentioned (p. 93), there is a great deal of probability that Yaśodharman and Narasiṁha-gupta Bālāditya made common cause against Mihirakula, and that their wars against Mihirakula were parts of the same campaign.[49]

Hiuan Tsang's account of Mihirakula after his release from captivity has been summarized above (p. 91). But this cannot be regarded as

48 Cf. the revised translation by Kielhorn in *IA*, XVIII, 219. D. C. Sircar, *SI*, 395, n.1.

49 Thakur (op. cit., p. 171) thinks that there were two separate campaigns.

historical. For it would imply that Mihirakula obtained possession of Kashmir and Gandhāra towards the very end of his reign, after his discomfiture at the hands of Yaśodharman and Bālāditya. But, as noted above, there are good grounds to believe that both these kingdoms formed part of the empire of Mihirakula early in his career. It is just possible, however, that the rulers of these territories took advantage of his defeat to declare themselves independent and Mihirakula had to conquer them afresh.

The reigns of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula constitute the second broad stage and the most glorious period of Hūṇa power in India.

During the subsequent period, which forms the third stage, the Hūṇas occupied and wielded great authority in several regions in India, but they were no longer an important political factor, far less a dreaded power. The Hūṇa settlements in Uttarāpatha in the seventh century A.D. are referred to in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harsha-charita*,[50] and Hūṇa rulers and territories bearing the name Hūṇa-*maṇḍala* are mentioned in later records to which reference will be made in due course.[51] The best evidence of the continuance of the Hūṇa power in India after the death of Mihirakula is furnished by coins. These prove that there were at least two Hūṇa families ruling respectively in the Eastern and Western Panjab. The latter consisted of a large number of rulers who probably ruled between A.D. 550 and 675.

Quite a large number of Hūṇa coins, mainly of copper, have been found in the plateau of Manasawal, situated on the outer range of the Siwalik hills at an elevation of about two thousand feet, in the Hoshiarpur district, Panjab.[52] The plateau is an extensive one, being about 10 miles in length and 6 by breadth, and the principal village Manasawal is 30 miles south-east of Hoshiarpur. Debased Indo-Sassanian pieces of silver, copied from the money of Firoz, are said to be 'very plentiful', in this region, and they are generally believed to have been struck by the White Huns. The copper coins found here were certainly issued by them. These were associated with the ordinary *jayatu vṛisha* coins of Mihirakula, and probably belonged to the sixth century A.D., not far removed from the time of the great Hun leader.

50 Tr. by Cowell, p. 101. The passage has been discussed by Jagannath who locates the Hūṇas in Kashmir (*NIA*, V, 250).

51 Somadeva, in his *Nītivākyāmṛita*, refers to the conquest of Chitrakūṭa by the Hūṇa king (*Bhandarkar Comm. Vol.*, 216). The author lived in the tenth century A.D. and it is therefore uncertain whether the conquest referred to by him took place before or after the death of Mihirakula. A Hūṇa king ruling in the ninth century A.D. is referred to in the Āṭpur inscription dated 977 (*Bh., List*, No. 85). Hūṇa royal families of the eleventh century are referred to in two inscriptions (*ibid.*, Nos. 289, 1227)

52 For a detailed account cf *JRAS*, 1907, p. 91.

The coins bear names of several chiefs among whom Mihiradatta, Prakāśāditya, Uditāditya, Jishṇu and Śri Valhā (?) may be regarded as fairly certain. Another name on these coins was originally read as Vyāghramusha but has been subsequently corrected to Vyāghramukha, and he has been identified with Vyāghramukha of the Chāpa dynasty referred to by the astronomer Brahmagupta as the king in whose reign he wrote his *Brahma-sphuṭa-siddhānta* in Śaka 550 (A.D. 628). It has further been suggested on the basis of this identification, that the Chāpas were allied to the Hūṇas. Such conclusions, must, however, be accepted with reserve, and the proposed identification makes it doubtful whether all the rulers named on the coins may be taken as Hūṇa rulers of the sixth century A.D. as suggested by V. A. Smith. The coins are of irregular shape, and their execution is extremely rude. This shows that the chiefs were not very powerful. But the abundance of coins of small value indicates that the site was an important Hūṇa locality.

The collapse of the Hūṇa political power in India was due not only to the defeat of their chiefs Toramāṇa and Mihirakula but also, and perhaps mainly, to the crushing blow given to their central authority on the Oxus by the combined forces of the Western Turks and the Persians some time between A.D. 563 and 567.[53] Hūṇa power henceforth ceased to be a dreaded scourge in the East as it had been for nearly a century. But the Hūṇas continued as an important factor in Indian politics till at least the end of the tenth century A.D. The Pāla Emperor Devapāla curbed the pride of the Hūṇas in the first half of the ninth century A.D., as will be related in Ch. XXIII. An inscription, dated A.D. 899, refers to a Chālukya feudatory chief of Kāthiāwār peninsula as 'having freed the earth from the Hūṇa race' by slaying Jajjapa and other kings.[54] Whether he did this on his own behalf or as a follower of his liege lord, the Partihāra Emperor, it is difficult to say; nor do we know the particular locality where Jajjapa ruled. But the Hūṇas survived the onslaughts of the Pālas and the Pratihāras. In the tenth century two Paramāra kings, Śīyaka II and Sindhurāja, claimed to have defeated Hūṇa kings.[55] Towards the close of that century a Hūṇa king was a suitor for the hand of princess Durlabhadevī in a *svayaṁvara* ceremony and, having been rejected, is said to have fought with the Chalukya king Durlabha who was fortunate in winning the hand of the princess.[56] In medieval India the Hūṇas came to be regarded as one of the 36 Rājput clans.

53 For a detailed account cf Chavannes, op. cit.

54 Una Pl. *EI*, IX, 6.

55 *DHNI*, II, 850, 860.

56 *Ibid.*, 945.

IV. THE GURJARAS

1. *The Origin*

Among the various States that arose in Northern India after the break-up of the Gupta Empire the one founded by Harichandra in the heart of Rajputana, within the boundaries of the former Jodhpur State, has a special importance. The royal family was called Pratīhāra, and the region was known as Gurjaratrā, the old form of Gujarāt. From the use of the phrase Gurjara-Pratīhāra,[57] describing the family of a ruler in this region, it has been inferred that the Pratīhāras formed a clan of the Gurjara tribe. It has accordingly been held by many scholars that Harichandra was a member of the Pratīhāra clan of the Gurjara tribe, and the kingdom founded by him came to be known as Gurjaratrā after the tribal name. It has been pointed out that there were other localities with names which show clear associations with the Gurjaras, such as Gujrānwālā, Gujrāt and Gujar-khān in the Panjab, Gujargarh in the northern part of Gwalior State and lastly the province now known as Gujarāt, though not called by that name before the tenth century A.D. Further, the district of Saharanpur was also called Gujarāt in the eighteenth century.

These place-names have been taken to mark the different settlements of the Gurjara tribe or people in ancient times. This inference seems to be corroborated by the present distribution of the Gujars, who are undoubtedly the modern representatives of the Gurjaras. They are widely spread over the whole of north-western India, being pretty numerous in the Western Himālayas, the Panjab, Uttar Pradesh, Western Rajputana and Gujarāt. They are found in the hilly country beyond the Indus but are not met with to the south of the Satpura Hills in the Deccan.

The ancient localities bearing names derived from Gurjara, and the distribution of the modern Gujars, have led many scholars to regard the Gurjaras as a foreign people who came to India, along with the Hūṇas, through the north-western passes and gradually spread towards the south and east—the stages of their advance being roughly marked by the localities named after them.[58]

This view is not, however, shared by all. Some scholars maintain that Gurjara was primarily the name of a country, and not of a people.[59] It has even been suggested that the various localities bearing

57 *EI*, III, 266.

58 'Gurjara-Pratīhāras' by R. C. Majumdar in *JDL*, X, 1 ff (to be hereinafter referred to as *GP*).

59 D. C. Ganguly in *IHQ*, X, 337, 613; XI, 167; *JBORS*, XXIV, 221; *PIHC*, III, 513. These views have been criticized in *IC*, I, 510; IV, 113; *IHQ*, XIII, 137. Ganguly's view has been elaborated in Ch. XXV of this volume.

names derived from the word Gurjara were originally parts of a large homogeneous country called Gurjaradeśa and now represent merely isolated fragments of it.[60]

This extreme view has not found favour with many. The theory that Gurjara was primarily the name of a country whose inhabitants were also called Gurjaras is also open to serious objections. In the first place, it should be remembered that there was no common geographical name for the wide area claimed for Gurjaradeśa, and there is nothing to distinguish it as a separate political, social, or geographical unit from the rest of Northern India. Secondly, the old literature of India contains distinct names such as Lāṭa, Surāshṭra, Pañchāla, Madra, etc. to denote various parts of the so-called Gurjaradeśa. Thirdly, Gurjara as the name of a country is conspicuous by its absence in ancient Indian literature. Fourthly, even in later times, the place-names are not Gurjara, pure and simple, but forms derived from it such as Gurjaratrā, Gurjarāshṭra, Gujarāt, Gujranwālā, Gujar-khān which naturally mean lands of the Gurjaras.

We find an almost exact parallel case in Mālava. The settlements of the Mālava tribe in ancient times in the Panjab and Rajputana are known from their coins and from literature, both Greek and Indian.[61] But today there is one big province called Mālava which, like Gujarāt, was not known by that name until comparatively later times. No scholar has ever doubted that Mālava was originally the name of a people whose various settlements in different times also came to be called by that name. It is most natural and reasonable to conclude that Gurjara was also originally the name of a people whose various settlements were called by names derived from that of the people.

But although Gurjara may be readily accepted as the name of a people, there is not equally convincing argument in favour of the view that they were foreigners who came to India along with the Hūṇas.[62] The fact that the Gurjaras suddenly rise into political importance shortly after the Hūṇa invasion, and seem to advance gradually from the Panjab towards the east, no doubt lends some support to it. But it is at best a probable theory. For the Mālavas also similarly advanced from the west, and many other peoples or tribes such as the Chālukyas and the Kalachuris suddenly emerge as important political powers about this time. But none of these is looked upon as foreign on that account. While therefore we may provisionally accept the Gurjaras as a people wandering in many parts of Western India, we should keep an open mind as to their original home.

60 Munshi, *The Glory that Was Gurjaradeśa*, 5-6.

61 Cf. the history of the Mālavas in Vol. II.

62 For an elaborate discussion of this view, cf. Ch. XXIV.

2. *Gurjara Kingdom in Jodhpur*

Harichandra, to whom reference has already been made, founded what may be regarded as the earliest Gurjara ruling family in India. The early history of this family is furnished by an inscription found at Jodhpur.[63] It first traces the origin of the Pratīhāra clan to the epic hero Lakshmaṇa and then refers to an illustrious Brāhmaṇa named Harichandra Rohilladdhi who was well versed in the Vedas and other religious scriptures. He first married the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa, and took as a second wife a Kshatriya lady named Bhadrā. The sons born of the former became Pratīhāra Brāhmaṇas, while the sons of Bhadrā came to be known as Pratīhāras. He had four sons by the latter, all fit to hold the earth, who conquered the fort of Māṇḍavyapura and erected there a high rampart. One of these sons was Rajjila whose grandson Nāgabhaṭa fixed his permanent capital at the great city of Meḍantaka. The inscription then gives a brief history of the family up to Bāuka, eighth in descent from Nāgabhaṭa, and eleventh from Harichandra. It is dated, and the year is most probably 894 *Samvat* (A.D. 837). Kakkuka, the younger brother of Bāuka, has also left an inscription dated A.D. 861.[64] As these two brothers represent the twelfth generation of kings, the foundation of the dynasty may be placed at about A.D. 550.

We may thus hold that Harichandra began his career as a learned Paṇḍit but took advantage of the political condition caused by the downfall of the Gupta Empire to carve out a small principality for himself. There was nothing very unusual in a Brāhman exchanging *śāstra* (scripture) for the *śastra* (sword). An analogous instance is furnished by Mayūraśarman who founded the Kadamba dynasty.

Māṇḍavyapura, the first fortified settlement of the family mentioned in the inscription, has been identified with Mandor five miles to the north of Jodhpur. Medantakā, the capital city of Nāgabhaṭa, is most probably to be identified with Merta 70 miles north-east of Jodhpur. The kingdom of Harichandra may thus be located in Jodhpur in the heart of what is now called Rajputana. This name was then unknown, but at least a part, if not the whole, of it soon came to be called Gurjaratrā,[65] evidently after the Gurjaras who under Harichandra had conquered the region. This Gurjara kingdom lasted for more than 300 years from the middle of the sixth to the middle of the ninth century A.D. The advance of the Gurjaras to this region evidently

63 *EI*, XVIII, 87.

64 *EI*, IX, 277.

65 This name occurs in an inscription of Kakkuka (*EI*, IX, 280) and it comprised at least the districts of Didwana and Parbatsar (*ibid.*, 278; *JBBRAS*, XXI, 414-15).

brought them into conflict with Prabhākara-vardhana, the ruler of Thāneśvar, to which reference will be made in due course.

3. *Gurjaras of Lāṭa*

The country known as Lāṭa was usually divided into three parts. Northern Lāṭa extended from Ānandapura (Vaḍnagar in Gujarāt) to the Mahī river, Central Lāṭa comprised the land between this river and the Kim, while Southern Lāṭa stretched beyond this river as far as the Ambika. We possess some contemporary records about Central Lāṭa which give us a fair idea of its political condition in the sixth century A.D.

An inscription issued from Bhṛigukachchha (Broach), and dated in A.D. 541, refers to *Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja* Saṅgrāma Siṁha.[66] As the village granted by him is also located in the Broach district there is no doubt that he ruled in Central Lāṭa. He makes no reference to any overlord but his titles seem to indicate that he paid at least nominal allegiance to a suzerain king. The identity of the latter cannot, however, be established.

As mentioned above, the Kalachuris ruled in this region towards the close of the sixth century A.D. But it is not unlikely that the Gurjaras had already established a small kingdom in Central Lāṭa. The first three kings of this dynasty were Dadda I, his son Vītarāga Jayabhaṭa I, and the latter's son Dadda II Praśāntarāga. As the known dates of the last-named king are A.D. 629 and 641,[67] Dadda I may be put in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. He is said to have been born in the family of the Gurjara kings (*Gurjara-nṛipati-vaṁśa*) and may therefore be identified with Dadda, one of the four sons of Harichandra who founded the Gurjara kingdom in Jodhpur.[68] As

66 *EI*, X, 74.

67 For the dated inscriptions of Dadda cf. Bh. *List*, Nos. 1209-13.

68 Some scholars hold an altogether different view about the origin of the family as the following note of D. C. Ganguly will show:

'The Nausari plate (*IA*, XII, 77) and the recently discovered Watson Museum inscription (*EI*, XXIII, 149) lay down that in the family of the Mahārāja Karṇa (*Mahati Mahārāja-Karṇṇānvaye*), there lived, like a swan in a group of lotuses, the illustrious Dadda. This seems to indicate that among the predecessors of Dadda II there was a king of great note named Karṇa. Harichandra was the founder of the Pratīhāra family, and no king of the name Karṇa is known to belong to it. Hence it is fairly certain that Dadda's family had no connection with the Jodhpur branch of Pratīhāras. Dadda's relation with Pratīhāra dynasty cannot be established even if one takes Karṇa of the Nausari grant as identical with the epic hero of the name. For this will be conflicting with the traditional belief of the Pratīhāras that they were descendants of Lakshmaṇa, the younger brother of the hero of *Rāmāyaṇa*. Karṇa, in my opinion, was the founder of the family, just as Guhila was the founder of the Guhila dynasty. Gurjara was the name of the country. The Hāthīm-

noted above, all the four sons are described in the Jodhpur inscription as fit to rule the earth. The probability, therefore, is that while one of them, Rajjila, ruled in Jodhpur the other brothers also ruled over separate kingdoms. Dadda may thus be regarded as a ruler of a small principality and this strengthens the identification proposed above. One Dadda is said to have 'uprooted the descendants of the hostile family of the Nāgas',[69] but he is probably Dadda II. The inscriptions of Dadda II indicate that his kingdom extended from the Mahī in the north to the Kim in the south, and from the sea-coast on the west to the borders of Malwa and Khāndesh on the east. The city of Nāndipurī (Nandol in the old Rajpipla State) from which both his inscriptions were issued was presumably his capital.

As we shall see later, the locality defined above formed a part of the dominions of Kalachuri kings Buddharāja and Śaṅkaragaṇa. If, therefore, the kingdom was originally founded by Dadda I, we must presume that he or his successors lost it for a time or became feudatories of the Kalachuris. But it is more likely that the kingdom of Dadda I was originally in southern Rajputana, not far from the parent Gurjara state in Jodhpur, and later, after the fall of the Kalachuris, its frontier was extended further south. In any event, there was a Gurjara kingdom in Broach in A.D. 629 and the probability is that it was an offshoot of the main Gurjara kingdom in Jodhpur.

V. THE HOUSE OF PUSHYABHŪTI[70]

I. *Origin*

We learn from the *Harsha-charita* that a royal line was founded by one Pushyabhūti in a country known as Sthāṇvīśvara, the modern Thāneśvar (Thanesar), in the Ambala district (Panjab).

gumphā inscription (*EI*, XX, 79) tells us about the royal family of Kaliṅga. The *Harsha-charita* (p. 251) mentions the royal family of Mālava. A chief of Kalachuri dynasty is called an ornament of the royal family of Chedi country (*IA*, XVI, 22). The king Balavarman of Kāmarūpa is said to have been born in royal family of Prāgjyotisha (*Kss*. 71). Hence Gurjaranripati-vaṁśa may very well mean the royal family of the Gurjara country.'

It is to be noted, however, that in all the above examples, the ruler is said to have belonged to the royal family of the country over which he actually ruled. But Dadda would belong to the royal family of a foreign country, viz Gurjara, as there is nothing to show that the region over which he ruled was called Gurjara at that time.

69 Bh. *List*, No. 1209-10.

70 The Pushyabhūtis are described as 'Vardhana' in some modern books on the ground that the names of the kings of the family end in 'vardhana'. This may be misleading. The names of the kings of the Śaila dynasty of the Vindhya region also end in Vardhana (*EI*, IX, 41). The *Harsha-charita* mentions the family as 'Pushyabhūti-*vaṁśa*' (Führer ed.), *HC*, 206, 249, 267.

The royal seals[71] of Harsha-vardhana, the last and most powerful member of this family, do not mention anything about Pushyabhūti and give the following genealogy :

M. Nara-vardhana *m.* Vajriṇīdevī
|
M. Rājya-vardhana I *m.* Apsarodevī
|
M. Āditya-vardhana *m.* Mahāsenaguptā-devī
|
Mdh. Prabhākara-vardhana *m.* Yaśomatīdevī
|
Mdh. Rājya-Vardhana (II) — Mdh. Harsha-vardhana.

Nothing is known about the first three kings of this family except that the second and third were devotees of the Sun. But the clear contrast between their title *mahārāja* and that of *mahārājādhirāja* assumed by the next king leaves no doubt that they were not very powerful chiefs. As we know definitely that Prabhākara-vardhana died in A.D. 605 or early part of 606, the reign of the first three kings may be placed between A.D. 525 and 575. It may therefore be easily surmised that like the Maukharis, their immediate neighbours in the east, the Pushyabhūtis also took advantage of the fall of the Gupta Empire to found an independent principality.

Hiuan Tsang mentions Harsha-vardhana of this family as a Fei-she (*Vaiśya*).[72] The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*[73] states that a king, the initial letter of whose name was 'Ha', was a Vaiśya. As this king may be reasonably identified with Harsha-vardhana, the Pushyabhūtis may be taken to have belonged to the Vaiśya caste.

2. *Prabhākara-vardhana*

A few details of Prabhākara-vardhana have been preserved in the *Harsha-charita*. He bore a second name Pratāpaśīla and was a great general. The *Harsha-charita* indirectly describes his military campaigns by reference to him as a 'lion to the Hūṇa deer, a burning fever to the king of Sindh, a troubler of the sleep of Gurjara, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant the lord of Gandhāra, a looter to the lawlessness of Lāṭa, and an axe to the creeper of Mālava's glory'.[74] Reference has

71 *CII*, III, 231; *EI*, XXI, 75.
72 *HTW*, I, 343.
73 *IHIJ*, 50.
74 Führer (ed.), *HC*, 174; Tr., 101.

been made above to the Hūṇas and Gurjaras and the political condition of Sindh and Gandhāra about this time will be described later (Ch. XIX); Mālava and Lāṭa were probably under the sway of the Kalachuri Śaṁkaragaṇa or his son Buddharāja[75] and, as noted above, Prabhākara-vardhana probably led an expedition there in order to re-establish the sons of Mahāsena-gupta.[76] But both the *Harsha-charita* and the Kalachuri records prove that Prabhākara-vardhana failed to secure his object. If we believe in the statement of the *Harsha-charita* about the victorious campaigns of Prabhākara-vardhana, he must be regarded as one of the most powerful kings of this age. Some coins[77] bearing the legend Pratāpaśīla, and found in the Fyzabad district, Uttar Pradesh, are usually assigned to Prabhākara-vardhana. The *Harsha-charita* relates that Prabhākara-vardhana was 'by natural proclivity a devotee of the Sun'. The seals of Harsha-vardhana also refer to Prabhākara-vardhana as a devotee of the Sun.

Prabhākara-vardhana's queen Yaśomatī or Yaśovatī was born of a noble family.[78] She gave birth to two sons, Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana, and a daughter named Rājyaśrī. When Rājya-vardhana was nearing his sixth year, Harsha could just manage five or six paces with the support of his nurse's finger,[79] and was therefore about one year of age. The difference of age between Harsha and Rājyaśrī was about two years. About this time Yaśomatī's brother's son Bhaṇḍi, who was then only eight years old, was engaged to serve the young princes.[80] Subsequently Prabhākara-vardhana engaged Kumāra-gupta to wait upon Rājya-vardhana and Mādhava-gupta to wait upon Harsha-vardhana.[81] Both Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta were sons of the king of Mālava, who is to be identified with Mahāsena-gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty.[82] Kumāra-gupta was eighteen years old about this time. After the defeat of Mahāsena-gupta, probably at the hand of the Kalachuri Śaṁkaragaṇa, these two princes took shelter under their relation Prabhākara-vardhana. Prabhākara-vardhana chose Graha-varman, son of Avanti-varman of the Maukhari dynasty, as the bridegroom for Rājyaśrī, and celebrated the marriage ceremony with grandeur.[83]

75 Cf. pp. 222, 229.
76 Ante, p. 197.
77 *CII*, III, 231. Also cf. Ch. XXXII.
78 *HC*, Tr., 102, 153.
79 *Ibid.*, 116.
80 *Ibid.*, 119.
81 *Ibid.*, 132, 135.
82 *Ibid.*, 132.
83 *Ibid.*, 122, 128.

Some time after Rājyaśrī's marriage Prabhākara-vardhana sent Rājya-vardhana, whose age then fitted him for wearing armour, to Uttarāpatha at the head of a large army to crush the power of the Hūṇas. Rājya-vardhana was accompanied by the old councillors (*amātya*) and the devoted feudatories (*mahāsāmanta*). Harsha also followed him several stages on the horse.[84] When, however, Rājya-vardhana had entered the mountainous regions of Uttarāpatha, he spent several days away from camp on the outskirts of the snowy mountains. Harsha, who had been left behind, received the news that his father was down with violent fever.[85] He forthwith returned and, riding continuously without food or rest, reached the capital at noon the next day,[86] and met his ailing father. Yaśomatī, knowing that her husband's death was fast approaching, threw herself into a funeral pyre[87] and soon afterwards Prabhākara-vardhana died.

3. *Rājya-vardhana*

Shortly after the death of his father which took place about A.D. 605, Rājya-vardhana returned to the capital and ascended the throne. But he was so much overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his parents that he proposed to hand over the cares of sovereignty to Harsha, and himself adopt the life of a hermit.[88] Harsha, however, declined the offer. At this time grave news came from Kanauj. Saṁvādaka, a servant of Rājyaśrī, came to Thāneśvar and delivered the following message to Rājya-vardhana:

> 'On the very day on which the king's (Prabhākara-vardhana's) death was rumoured, His majesty Graha-varman was by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī also has been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kānyakubja. There is moreover a report that the villain, deeming the army leaderless, proposes to invade and seize this country as well.'[89]

Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana were greatly shocked at this terrible news, but lost no time in idle grief. Leaving Harsha in charge of the administration, Rājya-vardhana, accompanied by Bhaṇḍi, marched with ten thousand horse towards Kanauj. On the way he

84 *Ibid.*, 132, 135.
85 *Ibid.*, 133.
86 *Ibid.*, 135.
87 *Ibid.*, 154.
88 *Ibid.*, 170.
89 *Ibid.*, 173.

met the Mālava army,[90] and defeated it and captured an enormous booty. It is generally assumed that the Mālava king who fought with the Maukharis and Rājya-vardhana was no other than Deva-gupta, the only king referred to by name in the inscriptions of Harsha as being defeated by Rājya-vardhana. But it is possible to hold a different view on the subject. As already mentioned (pp. 222-23), Mālava, or at least a part of it, was in the possession of Buddharāja of the Kalachuri dynasty from A.D. 602 to at least up to A.D. 609. So it is not unlikely that the Mālava king, who was the adversary of Rājya-vardhana, was this king of the Kalachuri dynasty.

According to Harsha's inscriptions Rājya-vardhana had to fight with some other kings besides Deva-gupta.[91] Bāṇa mentions only Rājya-vardhana's victory over the Mālava king, possibly because the latter humiliated his patron's sister, whereas Harsha's inscriptions lay stress on Rājya-vardhana's victory over Deva-gupta probably because it secured for the Pushyabhūtis substantial political advantage. If Deva-gupta were not the king of Mālava his identity cannot be established.

After his victory over the Mālava king Rājya-vardhana sent back Bhaṇḍi to Thāneśvar with the booty of the war and himself proceeded towards Kanauj, obviously to secure the release of his sister from prison.[92] On his way he confronted Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, and his army. It is difficult to assert positively that Śaśāṅka was an ally of the Mālava king, as has been suggested by some scholars. Bāṇa does not hold Śaśāṅka responsible for the death of Graha-varman or for the imprisonment of Rājyaśrī. The same authority states that the Mālava king alone marched against Thāneśvar. Rājya-vardhana apparently did not think of the possibility of another struggle with any other chief on his way to Kanauj. For had he known that the Mālava king had an ally in the neighbourhood, ready to fight with him, he would not have probably sent his veteran general Bhaṇḍi back to Thāneśvar. In view of all this Śaśāṅka and the Mālava king may be regarded as having acted independently of each other. All the available authorities declare that Rājya-vardhana was killed by Śaśāṅka, though they differ in details. We learn from the *Harsha-charita* that Rājya-vardhana 'had been allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king

90 *Ibid.*, 175.

91 According to Harsha's inscriptions Rājya-vardhana defeated Deva-gupta and other kings (*Śrī-Devaguptādayaḥ*). But the detailed account in the *Harsha-charita* of the very short period of his reign makes it impossible to believe that he fought with any king but Deva-gupta and Śaśāṅka. The 'other kings' can therefore be only the allies of these two who accompanied them (Ed.).

92 *Ibid.*, 223.

of Gauḍa, and then weaponless, confiding, and alone, despatched in his own quarters'.[93]

A commentary on the *Harsha-charita,* written by Śaṅkara in the fourteenth century, relates that Śaśāṅka allured Rājya-vardhana to his camp with a promise of giving his daughter in marriage to him. Rājya-vardhana, while enjoying a feast there along with his attendants, was murdered by Śaśāṅka in disguise.

Hiuan Tsang's[94] statement may be summed up as follows: (After the death of Prabhākara-vardhana) 'Rājya-vardhana came to the throne as the elder brother, and ruled with virtue. At this time the king of Karṇasuvarṇa, a kingdom of Eastern India, whose name was Śaśāṅka (She-shang-kia), frequently addressed his ministers in these words: "If a frontier country has a virtuous ruler this is the unhappiness of the (mother) kingdom." On this they asked the king to a conference and murdered him.' The Chinese pilgrim further relates that[95] Harsha was told that 'owing to the fault of his ministers, he (Rājya-vardhana) was led to subject his person to the hand of his enemy, and the kingdom has suffered a great affliction; but it is the fault of your ministers'.

According to the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*[96] the king with name beginning in *Ra* (Rājya-vardhana) was murdered, not by Soma (Śaśāṅka), who was a Brāhmin, but by a king of low caste.

Harsha's inscriptions[97] narrate that Rājya-vardhana 'after uprooting his enemies, after conquering the earth, and doing what was agreeable to his subjects, in consequence of his adherence to his promise gave up his life in the mansion of his foe'.

In spite of the differences among the authorities it is reasonable to accept the common element among them, viz the treacherous murder of Rājya-vardhana by Śaśāṅka. But some scholars do not share this opinion and their views have been discussed above (pp. 205-6).

The statements of Bāṇa and Hiuan Tsang and Harsha's inscriptions may be taken to be complementary to one another. Śaśāṅka probably designed to crush the power of Rājya-vardhana without confronting him in battle. He therefore proposed to enter into a friendly alliance with him, and expressed his desire to give him his daughter in marriage. Rājya-vardhana accepted Śaśāṅka's invitation

93 *Ibid.*, 178.
94 *HTB,* I, 210.
95 *HTB,* I, 211.
96 *Śāsanesmi tathā śakta somākhya sasamo nṛipa* ||
Sopi yāti tavāntena nagnajāti-nṛipeṇa tu. || v. 720. *IHIJ*, 53.
Somākhyo dvijāhvayo mahābhogī bhavehyasau || v.730
97 *EI,* IV, 210.

and went to his camp to discuss the proposal. He was not shrewd enough to see through the game. His ministers should have pointed out to him the danger of visiting the enemy's camp, but they did not do that. Rājya-vardhana, in accordance with his promise, and without making any arrangement for his safety, went to Śaśāṅka's camp, and fell a victim to a treacherous attack by the latter. The motive which prompted Śaśāṅka to take recourse to this unfair means is not far to seek. When he confronted Rājya-vardhana in battle he came to learn that a noble named Gupta took possession of Kanauj.[98] This placed him in between two enemies, and he got out of this critical situation by treacherously murdering Rājya-vardhana.

Rājya-vardhana was a devotee of Sugata, i.e. Buddha.[99] As the *Harsha-charita* informs us that on the eve of the Hūṇa war his age just fitted him to put on armour, he may be taken to have been twenty or twenty-one years of age at the time of his accession. His death must have followed in the course of a few days or months.

98 *HC*, Tr., 224.
99 *EI*, XXI, 75.

CHAPTER TEN

HARSHA-VARDHANA AND HIS AGE

I. SOURCES

HARSHA WAS ONE OF INDIA'S greatest rulers who, by his conquests, made himself a paramount sovereign and an emperor, and brought about the political unification of a large part of Northern India. Fortunately, the history of his reign does not suffer from want of information. As remarked by V. A. Smith, his history is almost as fully known as that of Chandra-gupta Maurya or Aśoka.

A very important source of Harsha's history is the Sanskrit work named *Harsha-charita* written in prose by Bāṇa, who was Harsha's court-poet and wrote from his personal and intimate knowledge of Harsha's early life and rule. Perhaps the historical value of his work suffers somewhat by being a poet-laureate's panegyric on his royal patron. But it is quite easy to separate facts from the poet's fancies and exaggerations. Some of the statements of Bāṇa are corroborated by other sources as indicated later. But the *Harsha-charita* has its great value as a source of the social history of the times. It calls up a graphic picture of the life of those days at different levels, the life of the lowly in the village, the busy and strenuous life of the camp, the high life of luxury and ceremony at the court and the palace, or the ascetic and austere life at the hermitage.

The India of Harsha is also described by a foreign eye-witness, the famous Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang. His account, in its wide scope and abundant and concrete details, reads almost like a gazetteer. Hiuan Tsang's record is supplemented by his biography written by his friend Hwui-li.

To these may be added a few inscriptions and coins which are valuable supplements to literary evidence.[1]

1 The inscriptions are:

(1) Banskhera CP., year 22 (A.D. 628), *EI*, IV, 210.
(2) Madhuban CP., year 25 (A.D. 631), *EI*, VII, 157.
(3) Sonpat Copper Seal, *CII*, III, 231.
(4) Nālandā Seals, *MASI*, 6.66, p. 68.

II. ACCESSION

The history of the Pushyabhūti family, to which Harsha belonged, down to the tragic events which led to the death of his elder brother Rājya-vardhana, has been discussed in the preceding chapter. Bāṇa has described in detail how on the death of Rājya-vardhana his younger brother Harsha ascended the throne of Thāneśvar.[2] Curiously enough, Hiuan Tsang has represented Harsha and his ancestors as rulers of Kanauj. He has also narrated how the statesmen of Kanauj, on the advice of their leader Po-ni (Bhaṇḍi ?), invited Harsha to become their sovereign, how he at first seemed unwilling to comply with their request, but later agreed on the advice of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, and being warned by the latter 'not to occupy the actual throne, and not to use the title *mahārāja*, became king of Kanauj with the title *rājaputra* and the style Śīlāditya'.[3]

Bāṇa's testimony is enough to show that Hiuan Tsang's account is wrong, and Harsha could not possibly have felt any hesitation in ascending the throne of Thāneśvar which was his by hereditary right. Evidently Hiuan Tsang had in mind the circumstances leading to the accession of Harsha on the throne of Kanauj, at a later date. As we have seen, his sister Rājyaśrī was the queen of Kanauj, but her husband was killed by the king of Mālava and she herself was made a prisoner. We shall see presently how Harsha rescued her, and it was possibly then that the throne of Kanauj was offered to him, for the widowed Rājyaśrī had no male issue.[4] In any case Hiuan Tsang's account leaves no doubt that Harsha not only became king of Kanauj but actually fixed his capital there and was known in later lays as the king of Kanauj rather than of Thaneśvar.

2 *HC*, Tr., 178 ff.

3 *HTW*, I, 343.

4 This is the only way in which it is possible to explain the curious story of Hiuan Tsang about Harsha's accession to the throne. But it must be admitted that a mystery hangs round Harsha's assumption of the sovereignty of Kanauj. It is true that Graha-varman had no male issue (*HC*, Tr., 245), but as pointed out above (p. 186), Graha-varman had a brother whose name, beginning with *Su*, occurs in the Nālandā Seal as the successor of Avanti-varman. As Graha-varman is expressely said by Bāṇa to be the eldest son of Avanti-varmañ, it may be safely presumed that his younger brother, whose name began with *Su*, succeeded to the throne of Kanauj after his tragic death. This can be hardly made to fit in with the story of Hiuan Tsang, even if it is applied to Kanauj. We know from the inscriptions of Nepāl that a Maukhari prince Bhoga-varman, whose father's name probably began with *Su*, was living at a time not far removed from Harsha's time (*HNI*, 119). The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* also hints that the Maukharis lost their kingdom and royal rank after Graha-Suvra, whom we may easily take as the two sons of Avanti-varman and the last Maukhari rulers of Kanauj. It is not unlikely therefore that Harsha had to conquer Kanauj by force, and that the story of the offer of the throne is a later fabrication (Ed.).

II. CAMPAIGNS AND CONQUESTS

Immediately after his accession, young Harsha was confronted with a double task: to recover his sister who 'burst from her confinement at Kānyakubja and with her train entered the Vindhya forest'; and to punish his enemies. *Senāpati* Siṁhanāda, a friend of his father, gave him an aggressive plan: 'Think not of the Gauḍa king alone: so deal that for the future no others follow his example.' Harsha thus planned a *digvijaya* and asked Skanda-gupta, the commandant of his elephant force, to prepare for it. His feudatories were also infected by the war-fever and dreamt of the conquest of distant lands like those of Turushkas and the Śakas, Persia, Pāriyātra and the Deccan. Thus began a military career which was not solely inspired by aggressive designs but was partly an act of vengeance and partly an effort to re-establish political unity. The first event of his march was the arrival of an envoy from king Bhāskara-varman of Assam, with an offer of alliance which was accepted by him. Next, he met on his way Bhaṇḍi coming with the whole force of the lord of Mālava defeated by Rājya-vardhana, with an enormous booty in elephants, horses, and other costly articles. Then, after a few days' march, he reached the Vindhya forest where he established contact with its chiefs named Vyāghraketu and Bhūkampa whose nephew Nirghāta referred him to a hermit named Divākaramitra for news about his sister. There a mendicant told him that in the morning he had seen a young lady in despair mounting the funeral pile. Then the whole company with the saint, whom Harsha recognized as the friend of his sister's husband, hurried to the spot in time to prevent Rājyaśrī from committing herself to the flames. From the Vindhyas, Harsha 'went back in a few marches to his camp stationed along the banks of the Gaṅgā'. It was probably to be the base of his operations against Śaśāṅka, but, as noted above (p. 206) it is doubtful if there was any actual conflict between the two. According to the *Ārya-Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* (vv. 723-25) there was a clash between the two kings, Harsha defeating Śaśāṅka and 'carrying a great havoc among the Bengali people'.[5]

Harsha was thus now free for his second task of achieving his *digvijaya* for which he collected a large force comprising 5,000 elephants, 2,000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry. The details of his conquests are not fully known. According to Hiuan Tsang he first 'proceeded eastwards, invaded the States which had refused allegiance, and waged incessant warfare until in six years he had brought the five

5 For a different view about the encounter between Harsha and Śaśāṅka, see *ante*, p. 206.

Indias under allegiance'.[6] Bāṇa tells us that Harsha put Bhaṇḍi in charge of the campaign. We also gather from Bāṇa that Harsha 'pounded (*pramathya*) a king of Sindh', and took 'tribute from an inaccessible land of snowy mountain' (which may mean Nepāl). In the west, his conquests included the kingdom of Valabhī. At first 'the lord of Valabhī, who had been defeated by the great lord, the illustrious Harshadeva', sought the protection of Dadda II, the Gurjara king who belonged to the political system of the South under its paramount sovereign, Pulakeśin II, the Chālukya (Ch. XV). But later, the Valabhī king got back his kingdom and even became the son-in-law of Harsha. As such, he appears in the train of his father-in-law at the Assemblies held at Kanauj and Prayāga. The name of this son-in-law of Harsha, as given by Hiuan Tsang, probably corresponds to Dhruvabhaṭṭa, but he is undoubtedly Dhruvasena II.

Harsha's campaigns in Western India seem to have resulted in the submission to his suzerainty of a few other States like those of Ānandapura, Ki-ta or (?) Cutch, and Su-la-cha or Surāṭha (Surat), all of which are described by Hiuan Tsang as dependencies of Mo-la-po or Western Mālava, formerly subject to Valabhī. Some historians hold that Harsha's conquests or political influence extended also to Nepāl, on the assumption that his era was in use there,[7] but this is denied by S. Lévi,[8] who further points out that Nepāl at that time was a dependency of Tibet.

The course of Harsha's conquests suffered a serious set-back on his expedition towards the Deccan. Pulakeśin II of the Chālukya dynasty of Vātāpi inflicted a decisive defeat on him so that 'Harsha's *harsha* (joy) melted away through fear'.[9] The Chālukya records describe Harsha as the lord of the whole of northern country (*sakalottarāpatheśvara*) by defeating whom Pulakeśin acquired the high title of *Parameśvara.* Thus the suzerainty of India was practically divided in their days between Harsha and Pulakeśin whom the Yakkeri inscription[10] calls *Dakshiṇāpathapṛithivyāḥ svāmī*, 'Lord of the vast territory known as Dakshiṇāpatha'.

On the completion of his military campaigns Harsha sought to enforce peace by making his army sufficiently large and strong. He

6 *HTW*, I, 343. According to some texts the passage simply means that Harsha *fought* the Five Indias. The Five Indias are stated to comprise the whole of India between the Himalayas and the sea (*HTB*, I, 70). Cf. also Cunningham, *Anc. Geo. of India*, 13.

7 *IA*, XIV, 420.

8 *Le Nepal*, II, 152.

9 Aihole ins., v. 23; *EI*, VI, 6. For a contrary view that Harsha was not defeated, cf. *IHQ*, XXXVII, 246 (Ed.).

10 *EI*, V, 8.

brought his elephant corps up to the formidable strength of 60,000 and his cavalry to 100,000, as stated by Hiuan Tsang, so that with this overwhelming military might he was able 'to reign in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon'.[11] Thus his empire rested ultimately upon the basis of physical force. Bāṇa tells us that the elephants of the army were acquired by the emperor as tribute or presents or secured by 'the rangers of his own elephant forests'. The royal elephant, the emperor's 'friend in battle and sport', was named Darpaśāta. The horses of the army came from distant countries like Vanāyu (Arabia), Āraṭṭa, Kamboja, Bharadvāja, Sindh and Persia. Harsha's army also included camel corps as stated by Bāṇa.

As noted above (p. 206) Saśāṅka's death paved the way for the extension of Harsha's empire towards the east. In A.D. 643 he conquered Koṅgoda (Ganjam) on the east coast. This formed the limit of his empire which included Orissā, 80 townships of which he offered as a gift to a local Buddhist divine. He was also contemplating the holding of a Mahāyāna Buddhist Conference in Orissa. Karṇasuvarṇa, after Saśāṅka, seems to have passed under the rule of Harsha's friend, Bhāskara-varman, king of Kāmarūpa.

IV. EXTENT OF EMPIRE

The term empire connotes the sphere of direct administration as well as the sphere of influence. These two are to be separately viewed. In Harsha's case, the territory directly governed by him included (1) Thāneśvar (Eastern Panjab), (2) Kanauj, (3) Ahichchhatra (Rohilkhand), (4) Śrāvastī (Oudh) and (5) Prayāga. To these were added, after A.D. 641, (6) Magadha and (7) Orissa.[12] In 641 Harsha Śīlāditya assumed the title of king of Magadha and in that capacity exchanged embassies with China, as related below. His empire also included the small State of Kajaṅgala (Rajmahal) where he held his camp and first met Hiuan Tsang. There were many satellite States surrounding this imperial dominion and forming its extensive sphere of influence and suzerainty. Among these the most prominent were those of Kāmarūpa in the east, and Valabhī in the west, besides 18 States of his feudatory chiefs who formed his following and attended on him at Kanauj and Prayāga on the occasions of his quinquennial assemblies. Some of the distant kings maintained cordial relations with him and were his brethren in faith. Thus the king of Kapiśa, following Harsha, used to hold the *moksha parishad* 'at which he gave liberally to the needy' and had in his territories more than 100

11 *HTW*, I. 343.

12 For a critical discussion of the different views on the extent of Harsha's empire, cf. *JBORS*, 1923, pp. 311 ff.

Mahāyāna monasteries.[13] Like Harsha, too, he sought the company of Hiuan Tsang, whom he escorted for some distance on his return journey.[14] The king of Kāshmir was also a devout Buddhist like Harsha and shared his respect for Hiuan Tsang whom he retained as his guest for two years, giving him 20 clerks to copy out manuscripts and 5 men to act as attendants.[15] On the occasion of a conflict, the king of Kāshmir had to respect the requisition of Harsha for a tooth-relic of the Buddha. King Udito of Jālandhara in the Punjāb became a convert to Buddhism, 'whereupon the king of "mid-India" (Harsha) gave him sole control of matters relating to Buddhism in all India'.[16] Both he and the king of Kapiśa supplied escort for the Chinese pilgrim during his return journey. Harsha further commissioned four official guides to accompany the escort with letters written by the emperor (on fine white cotton stuff and sealed with red wax), which they were instructed to present in all the countries through which they conducted the pilgrim, 'to the end that the princes of these countries might provide carriages or modes of conveyance to escort the master even to the borders of China'. Thus Harsha's influence and fame extended all over Northern India and even up to the borders of China. Embassies were exchanged between him and the Chinese Emperor. A Brahmin envoy returned in A.D. 643 with a Chinese mission bringing the reply. This mission, which returned to China in A.D. 645, was followed by another mission from China under Wang-hiuen-tse, sent with an escort of thirty horsemen.[17]

Hiuan Tsang sums up the position as follows:

> 'Harsha reduced the neighbouring States to subjection, invaded the States which had refused allegiance, and ultimately brought the five Indias under allegiance, while countries far and near were also giving allegiance to him with the exception of Mahārāshtra.'[18]

A reference may be made in this connection to an old Kanarese inscription found in Shimoga district in Mysore, stating that 'while Śīlāditya, the light of the quarters, the most powerful, and a thorn in the way of the bravest, ascended the throne of the empire', his general, Pattani Satyāṅka, fell fighting in battle against the army

13 *HTW*, I, 123.
14 *Ibid.*, II, 269.
15 *Ibid.*, I, 259.
16 *Ibid.*, I, 296.
17 R. K. Mookerji, *Harsha*, 37-45.
18 *Ibid.*, 55; *HTW*, I, 343.

of Mahendra. Dr. R. Shama Sastry[19] takes Śīlāditya to be Harsha and Mahendra as his contemporary Pallava king, Mahendra-varman I. But this supposition is unlikely in view of the check to Harsha's progress towards the South from Pulakeśin II. Besides, it is more likely that this Śīlāditya was the Chālukya prince Śryāśraya who was at war with Pallava king, Mahendra-varman II of the seventh century A.D. Again, to Mayūra, Bāṇa's father-in-law, is attributed a verse which describes Harsha as the conqueror of Kuntala, Chola and Kāñchī. This was undoubtedly a poetic fancy though Harsha's fame as an emperor seems to have spread all over India.

Harsha's imperial position is also indicated in the institution of the Harsha era, used in inscriptions found in Nepāl, Magadha, Panjāb and Kanauj.[20]

V. THE GREAT CONTEMPORARIES OF HARSHA

In order to understand fully the position of Harsha in contemporary politics and to form a correct estimate of his imperial authority, reference must be made in some detail to the contemporary rulers of Kāmarūpa, Nepāl, Nāndīpurī and Valabhī.

1. *Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa*

Bhāskara-varman (p. 210) is the only king of Kāmarūpa who is known to have played some part in Indian politics. It was no doubt dictated by necessity, but nevertheless it reflects great credit upon his sagacity and statesmanship. At the time of his accession there existed a long-standing hostility between his country and the powerful kingdom of Gauḍa. Although his predecessor had checked the enemy, Bhāskara-varman wisely foresaw the necessity of making political alliances in order to ensure the security of his State against his aggressive neighbour. He followed the wise maxim laid down by Kauṭilya that 'common enemies of a state are the most natural friends'. Gauḍa was an age-long enemy of the Maukharis recently allied to the Pushyabhūtis of Thāneśvar, and so he was naturally attracted to them. Though we have no positive evidence that he sought alliance with the Maukharis, his ambassador Haṁsavega carried a proposal of alliance to the Pushyabhūti king who was intimately connected with the Maukharis and formed a political group with them. It has been suggested that Bhāskara-varman did this 'when Harsha stepped

19 *MAR*, 1923, pp. 8, 83.

20 Cf. *Bh. List*, Nos. 1385 to 1421. The attribution of those in Nepāl and even many others to Harsha era is, however, very doubtful. This will be discussed in connection with the history of Nepāl (Ch. XX). Cf. also Ref. 2 in fn. 26 (Ed.).

into the shoes of the Maukharis'.[21] But this is hardly accurate. For when Harsha met the envoy from Kāmarūpa he had not established his authority over Kanauj and the Maukharis. The probability is that the envoy started from Kāmarūpa even before Graha-varman, king of Kanauj, was defeated and killed. It is not unlikely that Bhāskara-varman also desired to make a similar alliance with him. Such an alliance might have been actually formed, though we have no record of it, or it might have been prevented by the rapid march of events at Kanauj. There is, however, little doubt that Bhāskara-varman desired an alliance with the powerful Pushyabhūti-Maukhari group as a counterpoise against the aggressive designs of Gauḍa. This clearly follows from the statement which Bāṇabhaṭṭa has put into the mouth of the envoy of Kāmarūpa. He said, in effect, that his royal master resolved never to do homage to any except God Śiva, and as he realized that such an object could not be achieved except by an alliance with a powerful ruler, he proposed an 'imperishable alliance' with Harsha. Harsha's reply, while accepting the alliance, is equally explicit: 'The prince's design, too, is excellent. Stout-hearted himself, with me, a devotee of the bow for his friend, to whom save Śiva need he pay homage'?[22] It was thus clearly understood on both sides that the main object of their alliance was to protect Bhāskara-varman against an enemy who threatened his independence. So far as we know, the only possible enemy of this kind, and against whom Harsha might be of some help to Bhāskara-varman, was Śaśāṅka.

In the course of his speech Haṁsavega observed, with the shrewdness befitting a seasoned diplomat, that 'friends enter upon a slavery disguised under a synonym'. Whether the envoy actually said this or not, it becomes very significant in the light of later events, and one may even suspect that Bāṇa deliberately put it in his mouth in anticipation of what actually happened. For while Bhāskara-varman achieved his main object and his territory was secure from foreign aggressions, there is no doubt that with the growing power of Harsha, the alliance, so far as Bhāskara-varman was concerned, became almost a synonym for subordination. This is at least the only reasonable inference we can draw from the somewhat circumstantial narrative of Hiuan Tsang[23] about him.

About the beginning of A.D. 643, when Hiuan Tsang was staying at Nālandā, Bhāskara-varman sent a messenger to Śīlabhadra, the head of that great monastery, with a request to send the Chinese

21 *PIHC*, VI, 49.
22 *HC*. Tr., 217-19.
23 Beal, *Life*, I, 70 ff.

priest to him. Śīlabhadra not having consented to the proposal, Bhāskara-varman sent a personal despatch to him stating that if the request be not acceded to, he would 'equip his army and elephants and trample to the very dust the monastery of Nālandā'. The threat had the desired effect and Hiuan Tsang visited Kāmarūpa.

Little did Bhāskara-varman dream, in the hour of his ignoble triumph, that there was even a greater bully than he. Harsha-vardhana, who had already sent several invitations to Hiuan Tsang, was surprised to hear that he had gone to Kāmarūpa. So Harsha sent a messenger to Bhāskara-varman, 'bidding him to send the priest of China to him at once'. With a great bravado Bhāskara-varman replied that 'Harsha might take his head, but not the Chinese priest'. This infuriated the great Emperor who sent a messenger to 'bring the head without any delay'. This laconic and peremptory message deeply alarmed Bhāskara-varman who immediately equipped his army of 20,000 elephants and his ships 30,000 in number, and passing along the Gaṅgā reached Harsha's camp at Kajaṅgala, near Rajmahal, along with Hiuan Tsang.

From this time forward Bhāskara-varman assumed a very submissive attitude. He accompanied Harsha to Kanauj and took part in the religious festivities. Later he attended the great quinquennial assembly of Harsha at Prayāga.

How far the detailed account of Hiuan Tsang may be regarded as historically true, it is difficult to say. But accepting it in the main as a correct version of what he actually saw and heard, we may draw some important conclusions about Bhāskara-varman. In the first place there is no doubt that he had gained in power and strength, and either directly ruled or exercised supremacy over a large part of Bengal, if not the whole of it. This is clearly proved by his threat to destroy Nālandā, as well as the journey across Bengal, to meet Harsha, with a fully equipped army and navy. Fortunately we have also epigraphic evidence in support of this view. For a copper-plate found at Nidhanpur[24] records some grants made by Bhāskara-varman from his victorious camp at Karṇasuvarṇa. This shows that the dominions of Śaśāṅka in Bengal, including his capital city, passed into the hands of Bhāskara-varman, while, as we have seen above (p. 251), the remaining parts of Śaśāṅka's empire, corresponding to modern Bihar and Orissa, were conquered by Harsha. Evidently all this took place after the death of Śāśāṅka, and more or less about the same time, i.e. about A.D. 641-42. Whether it was a result of tacit or definite understanding between the two allies or each independently acted

24 *EI*, XII, 65; *XIX*, 115, 246.

according to his convenience and opportunity, it is difficult to say. The latter view seems more probable, and offers a satisfactory explanation of the strained relations between the two. The incident of Hiuan Tsang might have been the immediate and obvious cause of the quarrel, but probably there were more deep-seated causes of the strange animosity displayed by each over this comparatively trifling affair. We can well imagine that Bhāskara-varman was puffed up with vanity at his recent annexation of Bengal and this sufficiently explains his haughty and overbearing attitude towards both Śīlabhadra and Harsha. But the latter, now the lord of a big empire, could ill brook this defiant attitude of one who, though nominally an ally on equal terms, was really much inferior in power and status. He seized the earliest opportunity to teach his friend a lesson which he never forgot. Bhāskara-varman now realized, what his envoy hinted long ago, that friendship between unequals often becomes the synonym of slavery in disguise. In seeking an alliance with Harsha-vardhana Bhāskara-varman gave evidence of statesmanship in his early life. In accepting without demur the role of an inferior ally he showed a shrewd practical wisdom befitting his old age. This seems to be the most reasonable interpretation of the position of Bhāskara-varman *vis-a-vis* Harsha-vardhana. It would be idle to pretend that in A.D. 643 he continued to be an ally on equal terms, as in A.D. 606,[25] and equally wrong to suppose that he was a feudatory of Harsha, or paid formal homage or allegiance to that emperor.[26]

We do not hear anything more of Bhāskara-varman till after the death of Harsha-vardhana. It is said in the Chinese chronicle that while Wang-hiuen-tse, with the help of the contingents from Nepāl and Tibet, carried on his victorious campaign in N. Bihar, as will be related later, Bhāskara-varman sent supplies to him. What part he played in that strange episode is not fully known, but the Tibetan invasion which followed in its train, under Srong-tsan Gampo, seem to have had disastrous effect on his kingdom.

2. *Aṁśu-varman of Nepāl*[27]

Aṁśu-varman, who usurped the royal authority in Nepāl (p. 215), founded a new dynasty which is designated Vaiśya-Ṭhākuri in the

25 This is maintained by Tripathi (*Kanauj*, 104-6).

26 This is the view of R. K. Mookerjee (*Harsha*, 44) who further states that Bhāskara-varman was anointed king by Harsha. That this position is untenable has been shown by D. C. Sircar (*PIHC*, VI, 49) who thinks that in c. A.D. 643 Bhāskara-varman was 'a subordinate ally' of Harsha. I would prefer the term 'inferior ally' as there is no evidence of political subordination of Kāmarūpa (Ed.).

27 For the history of Nepāl, cf. I. S. Lévi, *Le Nepal*, II, 134 ff; 2. R. C. Majumdar, 'The Chronology of the Early Kings of Nepal' (*B. C. Law Volume*. I. 626 ff.);

Vaṁśāvalīs. All Thākurs are still regarded in Nepāl as belonging to the royal clan, whatever be their actual station in life, and they enjoy certain privileges. 'Vaiśya' probably denoted the clan to which Aṁśu-varman belonged rather than the caste of that name, and it is interesting to note that his great contemporary, Emperor Harsha-vardhana, is also called a Vaiśya by Hiuan Tsang.[28] Another point of contact between the two was that the sisters of both were married to members of the Maukhari family of Kanauj.[29] Whether these had anything to do with the rise of Aṁśu-varman to power it is difficult to say. But there is no doubt that he established his authority on a strong basis. The findspots of Aṁśu-varman's inscriptions prove that he was the master of the whole of the Nepāl valley proper, and his kingdom probably extended a great deal further to the east. Although we do not find any royal title in his inscriptions, wherein he calls himself only *mahāsāmanta,* he issued coins[30] with the title *Mahārājādhirāja,* and is referred to as such in the inscriptions of his successor.

It is a moot point whether Nepāl at this time formed a part of Harsha-vardhana's empire. Those who advocate this view advance two arguments in favour of it. In the first place they rely upon the passage[31] in the *Harsha-charita* which implies that Harsha conquered a Himalayan territory, difficult of access. But, as has been pointed out by Lévi,[32] this country need not be taken as Nepāl and most probably refers to Tukhāra. The second argument rests on the interpretation of the date in the inscription of Aṁśu-varman. His charters are dated in the years 30, 32, 34, 39 and another, of which the decimal figure is certainly 40, but the unit figure has been doubtfully read as 4 or 5. Almost all the scholars have referred these dates to the Harsha era, and if we accept this view, we have to admit that Aṁśu-varman acknowledged the supremacy of Harsha-vardhana. This view is apparently based on a tradition recorded in the Vaṁśāvalīs that about this time king Vikramāditya of Ujjain conquered Nepāl and introduced his era. But there is nothing in the charters themselves to show that the years are reckoned according to Harsha era, nor do they

also 'Eras of Nepal' *JA* 6 (1959), 47-9 (Ed.). For inscriptions, Cf. Indraji in *IA,* IX, 163 ff; *Le Nepal,* III; *HNI,* 242.

28 *HTB,* I. 209. Cunningham has suggested that 'Vaiśya' here means the Vaisa or Bais Rājputs who are met with in large numbers in Oudh (*Ibid.,* n. 12).

29 Bhoga-varman, the nephew of Aṁśu-varman (ins. no. 7 of Indraji), is described as 'King Bhoga-varman, the crest-jewel of the illustrious Varmans of the Maukhari Dynasty' (ins. no. 15 of Indraji). For Harsha's sister married to Maukhari Graha-varman, see above, p. 242.

30 For the coins, cf. *CCIM,* I, 281, 283.

31 *Atra pārameśvarena tushāro-śaila-bhuvo durgāyā grihītaḥ karaḥ.*

32 *Le Nepal,* II, 145.

indicate in any way the subordination of Aṁśu-varman to Harsha-vardhana. But there is a more fatal objection to the theory. Hīuan Tsang, who visited Eastern India some time about A.D. 637, observes as follows in connection with Nepāl:

'Lately there was a king called Aṁśu-varman who was distinguished for his learning and ingenuity. He himself had composed a work on "sounds"; he esteemed learning and respected virtue, and his reputation was spread everywhere.'[33]

Hiuan Tsang's account shows that Aṁśu-varman had died shortly before his visit to that quarter, i.e. c. A.D. 637.[34] But the latest known date of Amśu-varman, viz 44 (or 45), would correspond to A.D. 650 if referred to Harsha era. We cannot, therefore, accept the view that Aṁśu-varman used Harsha era in his records. In order to get over this difficulty the advocates of this view have suggested that Hiuan Tsang did not actually visit Nepāl but based his account on reports which were either inaccurate or misunderstood by him.[35] But this is a gratuitous assumption, and cannot be seriously considered unless we know from an independent authority that his observations were wrong. Besides, we now know that the Chinese embassy, which visited Magadha in A.D. 643,[36] passed through Nepāl and was received with honour by its king Narendradeva. This also proves that Aṁśu-varman had died before that date, and we must accordingly discard the theory which refers the dates in Aṁśu-varman's records of Harsha era.

S. Lévi has referred these dates to an era of Tibetan origin beginning in A.D. 595. But apart from the fact that no such era is known from Tibetan or any other source, it is equally incompatible with the fact that Aṁśu-varman was dead before A.D. 637. For the year 44 of his reign, which is given in one of his charters, would then correspond to A.D. 639.[37]

33 *HTB*, II, 81.

34 Watters gives this date for Hiuan Tsang's visit to this part of India (*HTW*, II, 335). Whether he actually visited Nepāl has been doubted (*Ibid.*, 84), but it is reasonable to hold that he got his news about Nepāl when he was travelling in that region. I do not know on what authority R. G. Basak holds that Hiuan Tsang visited Nepal in A.D. 645 (*HNI*, 295), i.e. more than a year after the pilgrim had left India (Ed.).

35 *IA*, XIII, 422.

36 *Le Nepal*, II, 162.

37 Presumably in view of this difficulty Lévi assumed that Aṁśu-varman died in A.D. 639-40 (II, 155). But this is in conflict with Hiuan Tsang's statement, though it may be argued that the pilgrim got his information about Aṁśu-varman's death when he visited Nālandā for the second time at the end of A.D. 642 (HTW, II, p. 335) (Ed.).

Nevertheless there is a great deal of force in Lévi's argument that the era might be of Tibetan origin. It was introduced at a time when the Tibetans are known to have exercised supremacy over Nepāl, and it was used in spite of the currency of the old era which is actually found about the same time in the charters of his nominal overlord. It is reasonable to hold that Aṁśu-varman whose daughter was married by the Tibetan king, was upheld as the *de facto* suzerain, and he therefore deliberately used the Tibetan era.

Lévi has pointed out that the Dalai Lama of Tibet wrote two letters to Lord Cornwallis in A.D. 1789 and 1792, and these were dated respectively in 1203 and 1206.[38] The epoch of the era used by the Dalai Lama would thus be A.D. 586. The dates in Aṁśu-varman's charters may be referred to this era, which probably commemorates the foundation of the united kingdom of Tibet by Srong-tsan, or his accession to the throne. Aṁśu-varman's rise to power may therefore be dated in or shortly before A.D. 616, the date of his earliest known charter. Although this is very problematical, it may be regarded as least open to objection. Further, it is to be remembered that the proved existence of an era starting from A.D. 586 makes it very unlikely that another era was instituted in Tibet only 9 years later. Lévi suggests that the era known as *San*, and now current exclusively in Bengal, is the Tibetan era of A.D. 595. The fact, however, is that the Hejira era was, for purposes of collecting revenue, counted as a solar year in Bengal under orders of Emperor Akbar, and this came to be known as the Fasli San now used in Bengal. There is no ground to suppose that the Tibetan era has left its trace anywhere else than in Nepāl. It may be urged that the dates in Aṁśu-varman's charters were his own regnal years and that the reckoning was continued by his successors. In that case, his accession to power has to be placed some time before A.D. 593. It has been urged against this view that the Harigaon Stele inscription of Aṁśu-varman, dated year 30, refers to some details of his coronation which therefore must have taken place shortly before that. This inscription mentions *abhisheka-hastī*, and *abhishek-āśva* (coronation elephant and horse), and it is very probable, though by no means certain, that the donations referred to in detail were made on the occasion of his coronation. Further, it is to be remembered that although seven inscriptions of Aṁśu-varman's reign are known, none of them bears any date prior to 30. Thus, the theory of the Tibetan era of A.D. 586, though not altogether free from objections, seems to be the most reasonable view.[39]

38 *Le Nepal,* II, 153.

39 The dates are most probably to be referred to Saka era with five hundred omitted (cf. *JAS*, 1959, Vol. I, 47-49) (Ed.).

The seven charters issued by Aṁśu-varman not only prove that his dominions were extensive and that he enjoyed high power and prestige, but also throw a great deal of light on the system of administration. Several of them describe him as 'busy in bringing about the welfare of the people' and 'pondering day and night over the meaning of various *śāstras*'. This is, in a way, corroborated by the statement of Hiuan Tsang quoted above, and the religious temperament of the king is further proved by his numerous donations and appointment of committees to administer the endowed property of the temples. On the whole his career must be regarded as a remarkable one, as he rose by his own efforts from an humble origin to occupy the highest position in the kingdom.

In suggesting a Tibetan origin for the era used in Amśu-varman's records Lévi was undoubtedly influenced by the view that Tibet at this time exercised supremacy over Nepāl. This rests upon the account of the Tibetan rulers Srong Tsan and his son Srong-tsan Gampo who ruled in the latter part of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century A.D. According to Tibetan chronicles the former led a victorious campaign to 'Central India', a geographical term the exact implication of which is obscure. This would imply that he passed through Nepāl and consequently must have conquered it. Again, we are told in the same chronicles that Srong-tsan Gampo conquered Assam and Nepāl and exercised suzerainty over half of Jambudvīpa. Whatever we might think of this larger claim, we learn from the Chinese sources also that Nepāl was a dependency of Tibet about A.D. 645.[40] The Tibetan king Srong-tsan Gampo married the daughter of Amśu-varman, and she was instrumental in introducing Buddhism to Tibet. Nepāl also closely co-operated with Tibetan forces in assisting the Chinese ambassador Wang-hiuen-tse, as will be noted later. But the inscriptions of Nepāl do not indicate in any way its subjection to Tibet.[41] It is not unlikely, however, that the dual government in Nepāl, inaugurated by Aṁśu-varman, was an indirect effect of Tibetan conquest. For while the Lichchhavi king was not actually dethroned, the actual power of government was placed in the hands of Aṁśu-varman as the representative of the Tibetan authority. But whatever we might think of this, the Tibetan supremacy over Nepāl was perhaps more nominal than real, and did not seriously interfere with its internal administration.

40 This constitutes the strongest argument against the view that Nepāl formed a part of the empire of Harsha-vardhana (Ed.).

41 Unless, of course, the dates in the charters of Aṁśu-varman be referred to a Tibetan era. For Aṁśu-varman's data and the eras of Nepāl, cf. *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. I, 1959, pp. 47-49 (Ed.).

3. *Dadda II of Nāndīpurī*

Reference has been made above (p. 240) to the Gurjara State of Nāndīpurī in the region round Broach and to its king Dadda II, who bore the title Praśāntarāga. Two inscriptions of Dadda II's reign have been found in Kaira, and three at Sankheda, in Baroda. The two Kaira inscriptions, dated A.D. 629 and 634,[42] were issued from Nāndīpurī. Dr. Bühler identifies Nāndīpurī with an old fort of that name, just outside the Jhaṅḍeswar gate to the east of Broach. Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji prefers to identify it with the modern Nandod in the Rajpipla State.

Of the three inscriptions from Sankheḍa, one,[43] dated A.D. 640, was issued by Raṇagraha, son of Vītarāga. Some think that Raṇagraha was the brother of Dadda II, but Dr. Bhandarkar suggests that Dadda II had another name Raṇagraha. The other two inscriptions[44] were dated in A.D. 641.

Three inscriptions[45] assigned to Dadda II are considered as spurious by some scholars. All were issued by the Mahārājādhirāja Dadda II from Bhṛigukachchha, and are dated in Śaka 400, 415 and 417 (A.D. 478, 493 and 495). These dates are obviously too early for Dadda II. But if they are referred to the Kalachuri era like the other inscriptions of this king the chronological difficulty disappears. Bühler regarded these plates as genuine.[46]

Dadda II Praśāntarāga is also unanimously identified with the king of this name who was the grandfather of Dadda Bāhusahāya. The Nausari plate of Jayabhaṭa III states that[47] Dadda II won glory 'protecting the lord of Valabhī, who had been defeated by the great lord, the illustrious Harshadeva'. Harshadeva is identical with Harsha-vardhana of Kanauj, and the lord of Valabhī seems to have been Dhruvasena II. How Dadda II became powerful enough to defy the might of Harsha-vardhana it is difficult to say. Probably his alliance with, or acknowledgement of the suzerainty of, Pulakeśin II explains his hostility and success against Harsha. It is stated that some hostile *sāmantas* made some unsuccessful attack on Dadda II.

4. *Valabhī and the Adjacent States*

Śīlāditya Dharmāditya succeeded his father Dharasena II (p. 221) on the throne of Valabhī about the same time as Harsha. His known

42 *IA*, XIII, 81, 88.
43 *EI*, II, 21. *Bh. List.*, 1211.
44 *EI*, V, 39.
45 *IA*, XIII, 116.
46 *Ibid.*, XVIII, 19.
47 *Ibid.*, XIII, 79.

dates range between A.D. 605 and 611 and his kingdom extended at least up to Junāgaḍh on the west. Hiuan Tsang[48] who visited Mo-la-p'o, i.e. Mālava, in A.D. 640 says that sixty years before his time Śīlāditya, the uncle of Dhruvabhaṭa, the reigning king of Valabhī, was the king of Mo-la-p'o. This Śīlāditya must be identified with Śīlāditya Dharmāditya, though Hiuan Tsang was undoubtedly wrong in describing him as king of Mālava who flourished after A.D. 580, the latest known date of his father. Mālava, along with Ānandapura, was under the sway of a Kalachuri dynasty from A.D. 595 to 610.[49] Most likely Śīlāditya conquered Mālava, Ānandapura, and Broach from the Kalachuris shortly after A.D. 609.

Hiuan Tsang[50] reports that Śīlāditya had great administrative abilities and was a man of learning and wisdom. The pilgrim gives a long description of his scrupulous regard for the sanctity of animal life as befits a devout Buddhist. 'During the fifty years and more of his reign', we are told, 'the wild beasts became familiar with men, and the people did not injure or slay them.' The king built a magnificent *vihāra,* and put in it images of the seven Buddhas. Every year he convoked an assembly called *moksha-mahāparishad,* and made rich gifts to the priests of the four quarters. According to the evidence of inscriptions Śīlāditya ascended the throne after A.D. 589 and closed his reign before A.D. 616. Hence Hiuan Tsang is wrong in stating that the king ruled for fifty years. Śīlāditya seems to have abdicated his throne in favour of his younger brother Kharagraha I. Śīlāditya's son Ḍerabhaṭa did not rule, though a later inscription relates that he was the 'lord of the earth'.[51] Ḍerabhaṭa had three sons, Śīlāditya II, Kharagraha II and Dhruvasena II.

It is stated that Kharagraha I administered the affairs of the kingdom in obedience to the order of his *guru,* who was his elder brother.[52] Kharagraha seems to have wrested Mālava from the hand of the Kalachuri Buddharāja. An inscription of Kharagraha's reign[53] was issued from the victorious camp at Ujjayinī in A.D. 616. This is the earliest known epigraphic evidence to prove that Mālava formed a part of the kingdom of the Maitrakas. Kharagraha I was succeeded by his son Dharasena III, an inscription[54] of whose reign is dated A.D. 623. The executor of the grant was the *yuvarāja* and *sāmanta*

48 *HTW,* II, 242.
49 See Ch. IX.
50 *HTB,* II, 261; *HTW,* II, 242; *Life,* 148.
51 *EI,* I, 91.
52 *IA,* VI, 14.
53 *PAIOC,* VII, 659; *SE,* 1934, p. 40.
54 *An. Rep. Watson Museum,* 1925-26, p. 14; *EI,* XXI, 181.

Śīlāditya. Dharasena III was succeeded by his younger brother Dhruvasena II Bālāditya.

Dates of the inscriptions of Dhruvasena II's reign range from A.D. 629 to 641. They prove that Dhruvasena II's kingdom extended from Saurāshṭra to Mālava.[55] Two of these inscriptions[56] record that the king granted some lands situated in the Mālavaka-*bhukti* or Mālavaka-*vishaya*, in Mālavaka, which is undoubtedly identical with Mālava. The villages containing the donated lands have been located near Ratlam and Mandasor.

Hiuan Tsang[57] visited Valabhī (Fa-la-pi) in A.D. 640. The country was 6000 *li* in circuit and the reigning sovereign was Tu-lo-po-po-t'a (Dhruvabhaṭa, i.e. Dhruvasena II), a nephew of Śīlāditya. The king 'was of a hasty temper and of shallow views, but he was a sincere believer in Buddhism'.

As stated above (p. 261) Dhruvasena II was once defeated by Harsha-vardhana and forced to take refuge with the Gurjara king Dadda II. The details of the conflict are not known, but there is no doubt that Dhruvasena soon regained his kingdom. We know further from Hiuan Tsang's account that he married the daughter of Harsha. Evidently the alliance which concluded the hostility was cemented by this marriage. It is hardly any wonder therefore that Dhruvasena attended the religious assemblies of Harsha-vardhana. It is unreasonable to infer from this that Valabhī was an integral part of Harsha's empire or that Dhruvasena was either his feudatory or subordinate ally.[58] His own inscriptions show him to be an independent king ruling over an extensive kingdom from A.D. 629 to 641, though like Bhāskara-varman, and many others, he undoubtedly thought it politic to win the good-will of the great emperor Harsha. As the latter was also his father-in-law, it is less excusable to interpret his submissive obedience to him as a sign of political vassalage. One important fact is generally over-looked though it has an important bearing on this question. It is the assumption of imperial titles by Dharasena IV, the son of Dhruvasena II, even in G.E. 326 (A.D. 645-46) i.e. before the death of Harsha. This is hardly compatible with the view that Valabhī formed a part of Harsha-vardhana's empire right up to the very end of his reign.

Hiuan Tsang mentions the independent kingdom of Mo-la-p'o which was more than 2000 *li* (333 miles) north-west of Bhṛigukach-chha. This direction is wrong in view of the information given by him that Mo-là-p'o (or its capital) was to the east of Mo-hi (Mahī

55 For possession of Kaira, cf. *JBBRAS* (NS), I, 70; Saurāshṭra, *Ibid.*, 53.

56 *EI*, VIII, 190.

57 *HTW*, II, 246.

58 *PAIOC*, XII, 524.

river). Su-la-ch'a[59] (Saurāshṭra), K'i-t'a (Kaira) and Ānandapura (Vaḍnagar) were the dependencies of Mo-la-p'o. The pilgrim visited Mo-la-p'o in A.D. 640. It has been noticed above that Ujjayinī, which was the capital of Mālava, was under the sway of the Maitrakas, and Dhruvasena II's kingdom extended from Saurāshṭra to Ratlam and Mandasor in A.D. 640. Kaira, Vaḍnagar, and Kāthiāwār were obviously within his kingdom. The independent kingdom of Mo-la-p'o, mentioned by Hiuan Tsang, must therefore be placed to the east of the 'Ratlam State'. Hiuan Tsang tells us that the people of Mo-la-p'o were of gentle disposition and for the most part very intelligent, of refined speech, and with a liberal education. Mo-la-p'o in the south-west and Magadha in the north-east, were the two countries in India in which learning was prized. The pilgrim takes the civilization of Mo-la-p'o as a model, which he compares with those of Valabhī, Saurāshṭra, Ānandapura, Kheṭaka, and A-t'a-li.

Mālava, the capital of which was Ujjayinī, was the only country in western India which could claim the honour of possessing a high state of civilization such as is described by Hiuan Tsang. Ujjayinī was one of the chief centres of cultural movements in India from the time of Buddha down to the end of Hindu rule. Kālidāsa closely associates himself with it, and Bāṇa,[60] who was a contemporary of Hiuan Tsang, gives a glowing description of its culture.

Hiuan Tsang[61] refers to another kingdom, named Wu-she-yen-na which was 466 miles south-east of Pi-lo-mo-lo, and which was 1,000 miles in circuit. It was ruled by a king of the Brāhmin caste. It is generally identified with Ujjayinī, but its distance and direction from Pi-lo-mo-lo bring us to ancient Daśārṇa country (Bhopal State) or further east of it. The pilgrim says that the ways of the people of this country resembled those of the people of Surath i.e. the people were of a rude violent nature, and did not care for education. Thus Hiuan Tsang's Wu-she-yen-na can hardly be taken as identical with Bāṇa's Ujjayinī. It may be noted in this connection that Hiuan Tsang's description of the political condition of Mālava and Gujarāt in the third and fourth decades of the seventh century A.D. is palpably inaccurate.

59 *HTW*, II, 248. Hiuan Tsang says that Su-la-ch's (i.e. Saurāshṭra) is 500 *li* west of Valabhī. It is 4,000 *li* in circuit. 'It had the Mo-hi river on its east side; the inhabitants were rich and flourishing; it was subject to Mālava.' 'The people were of rude violent nature, did not care for education ... As the country was on the highway to the sea all its inhabitants utilised the sea and were traders by profession. Near the capital was the Yuhshan-to hill (Ujjayanta).'

60 Ridding, *Kādambarī*, 211-12.

61 *HTW*, II, 250; 248; *JBORS*, XIX, 407.

VI. ASSEMBLIES

Harsha convoked a vast religious Assembly at Kanauj and arranged for discourses on Mahāyāna Buddhism by its exponent Hiuan Tsang. Invitations were issued to 'all the disciples of the various religious sects or schools, the Śramaṇas, Brāhmins and heretics of the five Indias'. From his camp at Kajaṅgala, Harsha proceeded along the bank of the Gaṅgā in a huge procession of 'several hundreds of thousand people', till he reached Kanauj in 90 days, and saw there assembled in advance 18 other kings, besides the kings of Assam and Valabhī, with their retinues, 3,000 Buddhist monks, 3,000 Brāhmins and Nirgranthas and about 1,000 Buddhist scholars with a following of 20,000 elephants and 30,000 ships.[62] Harsha as god Śakra, and Kumāra (Bhāskara-varman) as god Brahmā, took in procession to the Assembly the statue of Buddha on an elephant followed by more than 300 elephants carrying the distinguished guests—the Chinese pilgrim, the kings, ministers, and chief priests of different countries. The conference continued for 18 days under Hiuan Tsang as its president.

Next, Harsha found that it was time for him to hold the quinquennial Assembly (the sixth of his reign) for distribution of royal charities at Prayāga, the holy place of confluence of the two rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā (Jamunā). The king came to Prayāga attended by eighteen kings and found there already assembled about 500,000 people. Invitation was issued 'through the five Indias to the Śramaṇas, heretics, Nirgranthas, the poor, the orphans, and the solitary (bereaved) to come to the arena of charity and receive the royal gifts'. The accumulated gifts included gold, silver, pearls, silks and cotton, besides gold and silver-coins kept in hundreds of store-houses. One hundred long buildings were erected for accommodating the visitors, besides the imperial camp and the Assam and Valabhī camps. Images of the Buddha, Ādityadeva (Sun), and Īśvaradeva (Śiva) were installed on successive days, for purposes of the offerings. Ten thousand selected Buddhists were given each 100 pieces of gold, pearl, one cotton garment, besides drinks and meats, flowers and perfumes. Twenty days were taken to distribute gifts among Brahmins. In the end, 'the accumulation of five years was exhausted. The king freely gave away his own gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel, and bright head-jewel, and

62 *Life*, 172. (The reference given by the author shows that Kumāra, king of Assam, visited Harsha with 20,000 elephants and 30,000 ships when the latter was at Kajaṅgala near Rajmahal and then after a long interval they proceeded to Kanauj where they arrived after 90 days. There is nothing to indicate that the 20,000 elephants and 30,000 ships were taken by the king of Assam to Kanauj—Ed.)

then begged from his sister an ordinary second-hand garment.' What remained were only 'the horses, elephants, and military accoutrements' to maintain law and order in the country. This record of Harsha's charity remains unbeaten in history. Besides these special Assemblies, Harsha used to convene annually an Assembly of Buddhists for purposes of discussion.[63]

VII. ADMINISTRATION

The first few years of Harsha's reign were spent on campaigns and conquests by which his empire was being established and consolidated over a large part of Northern India. According to Hiuan Tsang, Harsha waged incessant warfare for six years and then was able 'to reign in peace for 30 years'. In about 643, the king told the Chinese pilgrim that 'he had been lord of India for thirty years and more'.[64] This would mean that all his campaigns were over by about A.D. 612 including those with Valabhī and Pulakeśin. There is, however, a view that the war with Pulakeśin took place much later, probably shortly before A.D. 643, the date of the Aihole inscription which mentions it (see Appendix). Harsha's conquest of Śaśāṅka's kingdom also took place after A.D. 619 while his conquest of Ganjam is dated A.D. 643. Thus Hiuan Tsang's statement that Harsha's conquests were over in six years by A.D. 612 and that he enjoyed peace for thirty years is to be understood as referring to the internal conditions of his kingdom and not to his later distant conquests. The peace that Harsha was able to give to the country so long was no doubt the result of his efficient administration. Unfortunately, very few details are known about it. It is apparent that the king himself took a large part in administration. The empire itself was won by his incessant activities and no one was more acquainted with all its different and distant parts. He was constantly moving through it, on hunting excursions, military expeditions, administrative tours, ceremonial progress, or religious pilgrimages. He went to distant Kāshmir to offer worship to a tooth-relic of the Buddha which he found concealed underground and then had it unearthed, and carried off by force, to enshrine it in a *vihāra* in Kanauj.[65] He held his camps at many places, and issued his two grants from his camps at Vardhamānakoṭi and Kapitthikā (Saṅkāśya). The Chinese pilgrim tells us how at the time when he first saw Harsha at Kajaṅgala, 'the emperor was visiting different parts of his empire'.[66] Here 'he held his court in his progress to East India'[67] He came to that place from Koṅgoda

63 *HTW*, I, 344.
64 *Life*, 183.
65 *Ibid.*, 181.
66 *HTB*, I, 215.
67 *Ibid.*, II, 183.

(Ganjām),[68] after spending some time in Orissa.[69] Bāṇa describes his camp at Maṇitāra along the Ajirāvatī river. It was surrounded by 'many camps of the renowned subject-kings'. As remarked by Hiuan Tsang, 'the king made visits of inspection throughout his dominions, not residing long at any place, but having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn'.[70] His travels in the far north probably made him acquainted with 'the martial fame and exploits of the Chinese emperor'.[71]

The Emperor, when at headquarters, also worked very hard, as stated by Hiuan Tsang: 'He forgot sleep and food in his devotion to good works... and the day was too short for him.'[72]

Next to the sovereign ranked the chief officers of the state, who probably constituted a *Mantri-Parishad* or Council. During the reign of Rājya-vardhana, Bhaṇḍi, his cousin, seems to have been the chief minister, for, on his death, Bhaṇḍi (Po-ni) called a meeting of the Council of Ministers to determine the succession. At the meeting, Bhaṇḍi said: 'I propose that he (Harsha) assume the royal authority: let each one give his opinion on this matter, whatever he thinks.'[73] It shows that the Council of Ministers wielded real power in the State, and the election of the king was in their hands. The Emperor appointed to the provinces governors, called *Lokapālas* by Bāṇa.[74] They were posted at chosen centres in different quarters.

The administrative divisions are thus mentioned in Harsha's inscriptions in the descending scale:

(1) *Bhukti* (province) such as Śrāvastī or Ahichchhatra *Bhukti;* (2) *Vishaya* (district), e.g. Kundadhāni or Aṅgadiya; (3) *Pāthaka* (subdivision of a district), and (4) *Grāma* (village), e.g. Somakuṇḍaka-*grāma.*

Among the chief officers of the State under Harsha are mentioned the following:

(1) Bhaṇḍi; (2) Avanti whom Bāṇa mentions as Harsha's 'Supreme minister of war and peace'; (3) Siṁhanāda, Harsha's *senāpati;* (4) Kuntala, the commandant of the cavalry; (5) Skanda-gupta, the commandant of the elephant force; (6) *Sāmanta Mahārāja* Īśvaragupta, keeper of records, mentioned in the Madhuban Plate; (7) Bhāna or Bhānu (Bhaṅḍi?) mentioned in the Banskhera Plate.

The Emperor's decrees were issued to officers of different ranks and grades, such as 'the *mahāsāmantas, mahārājas, daussādha-sādhanikas,*

68 *Life,* 172.
69 *Ibid.,* 159.
70 *HTW,* I, 344.
71 *Ibid.,* 351.
72 *Ibid.,* 344.
73 *HTB,* I, 211.
74 *HC,* 211.

pramātāras, rājasthānīyas, kumārāmātyas, uparikas, vishayapatis, and regular and irregular soldiers (*bhaṭachāṭa*)'.[75]

Hiuan Tsang says that these ministers and officers of State were paid their salaries not in cash but in kind, in grants of land, cities being assigned to them for their maintenance. The Emperor set apart a fourth of the crown lands 'for the endowment of great public servants', and another fourth for the 'expenses of government and State worship'. We are further told that 'those who are employed in the government service are paid according to their work'.[76] 'When the public works require it, labour is exacted, but paid for. The people were not subjected to forced labour.[77] While payment in kind was the rule for the Civil Service, the soldiers were probably paid in cash.[78] Harsha's army was made up of the four traditional elements: (1) Infantry; (2) Cavalry; (3) Elephants; and (4) Chariots.

The following account of Hiuan Tsang throws interesting light on the composition of the army, and the equipment of war.

> 'The National Guard (*lit.* warriors) are heroes of choice valour, and, as the profession is hereditary, they become adepts in military tactics. In peace they guard the sovereign's residence, and in war they become the intrepid vanguard.
>
> 'The army is composed of Foot, Horse, Chariot, and Elephant soldiers. The war-elephant is covered with coat-of-mail, and his tusks are provided with sharp barbs. On him rides the Commander-in-chief, who has a soldier on each side to manage the elephant. The chariot in which an officer sits is drawn by four horses, whilst infantry guard it on both sides. The infantry go lightly into action and are choice men of valour; they bear a large shield and carry a long spear; some are armed with a sword or sabre and dash to the front of the advancing line of battle. They are perfect experts with all the implements of war such as spear, shield, bow and arrow, sword, sabre, etc. (battle-axes, lances, halberds, long javelins and various kinds of slings) having been drilled in them for generations.'[79]

The country was not entirely free from brigands who rendered travelling not very secure at places. Hiuan Tsang, crossing the Chandrabhāgā (Chenāb), had to pass through a *palāśa* wood where a band

75 For the various administrative offices, cf. Ch. XXVII.

76 *HTW*, I, 176.

77 *HTB*, I, 87.

78 Cf., *Ibid.*, where it is said that soldiers 'are promised certain payments' whereas governors, ministers, etc. have each a portion of land.

79 *Ibid.*, 83; HTW, I, 171.

of about 50 robbers fell upon him, but he was saved by a Brahmin peasant blowing a conch which brought together about 80 villagers with arms.[80] Again, as he was sailing down the Gaṅgā on board a vessel with 80 fellow-passengers, ten pirate-boats, taking his ship in tow, brought it to the bank. The pirates then seized upon Hiuan Tsang as the best human sacrifice to offer to their deity, Durgā, when a storm broke out and frightened the brigands who took it to be the wrath of the gods and so set him free and became his disciples.[81] Harsha provided for a military escort to conduct the Chinese pilgrim safely across the Panjāb and its borders. In those days, 'the country between Siṁhapura (Ketās) and Taxila was frequented by robbers', and the pilgrim and his party were in constant fear of being despoiled on the way.[82] The comparative insecurity of the times is also hinted at by Bāṇa, who tells us of villagers who, 'despondent at the plunder of their ripe grain and bemoaning their estates, censured the sovereign, as he passed along, at the risk of their lives, saying, "where's the king? what right has he to be king?"[83] and also of complaints against the tax-collectors (*bhogapati*) and policemen (*chāṭa*)'.[84]

These stray cases of lawlessness did not, however, affect the general security prevailing in the country. Hiuan Tsang himself admits that 'as the government is honestly administered, and the people live together on good terms, the criminal class is small'. He further says that the Indians 'are of pure moral principles' and will not take any thing wrongfully but will yield more than fairness required'.

Hiuan Tsang characterizes the administration as 'generous' in the sense that it did not make any large demands upon the liberties and the pockets of the people. He reports:

> 'Official requirements are few. Families are not registered and individuals are not subject to forced labour contributions. Taxation being very light, and forced service being sparingly used, every one keeps to his hereditary occupation and attends to his patrimony.'

The enlightened character of the administration is shown by the creation of a Department of Records and Archives. Both good and bad were faithfully recorded 'in the official annals and state-papers'. while 'instances of public calamity and good fortune are set forth in detail'.[85] One of Harsha's inscriptions[86] and Bāṇa[87] mention the

80 *Life*, 73.
81 *Ibid.*, 87.
82 *Ibid.*, 191.
83 *HC*. 238 (Tr.. 209).
84 *Ibid.*, 280.
85 *HTW*. I, 154.
86 *EI*, I, 73.
87 *HC*, 227.

officers called *mahākshapaṭalika* (notary-in-chief), *akshapaṭalika* (the village notary), and the *karaṇika* (clerk).

Taxation was light. The main source of revenue was the crown lands, the tax on which amounted to a sixth of the crop according to the traditional standard.[88] Revenue was also derived from trade; light duties were levied at ferries and barrier stations.[89] The Madhuban Plate shows that the king's dues from a village comprised the *tulya-meya* (probably taxes depending on the weight and measures of the things sold), and *bhāga-bhoga-kara-hiraṇyādi,* i.e. the share of the produce, payments in cash, and other kinds of income.

While taxation was light the expenditure on mere administration was also very light, so as to leave the bulk of the revenue of the State for promoting public welfare. As stated by Hiuan Tsang, 'Of the royal land (the main sources of the sovereign's income) there is a fourfold division. One part is for the expenses of government and state-worship, one for the endowment of great public servants, one to reward high intellectual eminence, and one for gifts to various sects.'[90]

VIII. CAPITAL AND PALACE

Bāṇa describes the capital city Sthāṇvīśvara which was always resounding with shouts of triumph, booming of drums, songs of troubadours and minstrels, and bustle of business. Its principal street was 'the Bazaar street'. The Palace was surrounded by a white-washed wall, had mosaic floors of red lead, had four courts which on festive occasions appeared like 'seas of elephants and horses', was decorated with paintings and clay models of fishes, tortoises, crocodiles, coconuts, plantains, and betel trees. 'Its crocodile-mouthed conduits (*dhārāyantra*) conveying scented water filled its pleasure-ponds.' In the grounds of the Palace were seen lions in their cages, varieties of apes and orang-outangs (*vana-mānushāḥ*), musk deer scouting the garden, parrots, *śārikas,* and other rare birds in gold-painted bamboo cages, partridges in cages of coral. Harsha bathed in gold and silver vessels. He used golden footstools, water-pots, cups, spittoons and baths, even while on tour. He wore 'snow-white lower garments radiant with silk-threads, a bejewelled girdle, and a thin upper garment spangled with worked stars, with necklace of pearls and other ornaments'. He had women attendants. Valāhikā and Padmāvatī were the shampooing attendants of his father, and Hāriṇī, Līlāvatī, Dhavalākshī, Āvantikā, and others were his nurses.

88 *HTW,* I, 176; cf. Manu, VI, 130-31, 308.
89 *HTW,* I, 176.
90 *Ibid.*

The palace had its own staff which included numbers of door-keepers, porters, *chowrie*-bearers, chamberlains, chefs, bodyguards, physicians, *Purohita, Paṇḍits,* court-poets like Bāṇa and Haridatta and the King's Advisers. The same pomp marked his camps for his tours. The gate was dark with crowds of elephants. Close by were the horses leaping up so as to make the place appear 'all in waves'. Troops of camels made their place appear tawny.

IX. RELIGION AND LEARNING

We owe to Hiuan Tsang a first-hand account of India's civilization in the time of Harsha. The very visit of Chinese pilgrims like Fa-hien, Hiuan Tsang and I-tsing to India as seekers after her saving knowledge shows the pre-eminent and proud position India had attained in the realm of thought. They were out to drink in India's wisdom at its very sources, by visiting its chief seats of learning and contacting its teachers who were the exponents and repositories of that learning. India in that age was known to foreigners as 'the country of the Brahmins' who were 'the purest and in most esteem among its various castes and clans'.[91] Sanskrit was the language of the cultured classes and was used in the writings of the most famous Buddhist teachers. The best Sanskrit was then spoken in mid-India which was practically Harsha's Empire. The vigour and vitality of Brahmanical religion were represented in the number of its sects and schools. Bāṇa describes them as 'followers of Kṛishṇa, of Kapila, Kaṇāda, the Nyāya and the Upanishads, the Lokāyatikas, and so forth'. Bāṇa also mentions *Pārāśara* mendicants, *Jaina* monks, and *Śaiva* devotees; ascetic sects like the *Karpaṭin* (ragged ascetic), *Kāshṭha-muni* (hermit on a pillar), *Dagdhamuṇḍa, Pāṇḍurin,* or *Piṇḍapātin.* There were also worshippers of Śiva and Śakti like the *Kāpālika* and devotees of Durgā.[92] Hiuan Tsang also refers to the *Bhūtas* who cover themselves with cinders, the *Nirgranthas* who go without clothing, the *Kāpālikas* who wear chaplets of bones round their heads and necks and live in the holes and crevices of rocks, and the *Jaṭilas* with matted hair, the *Sāṅkhyas* and the *Vaiśeshikas.*

The religious and cultural conditions of the country are very well reflected and represented in the Vindhyan hermitage of the sage Divākaramitra, which was one of the most advanced centres of learning in those days and attracted students of various subjects. A good description of this noted seat of learning, located in the solitude of the hills, and amid sylvan surroundings, away from the dis-

91 *Ibid.,* 140.

92 *Life,* 86, 159.

tractions of social life, is given by Bāṇa. At the *Āśrama*, they were all busy 'pondering, urging objections, raising doubts, resolving them, giving etymologies, disputing, studying and explaining'. They represented the different sects of Jainas, the *Arhats* (*Digambara*?) and *Śvetapaṭas* (*Śvetāmbaras*); different classes of Brahmanical ascetics such as *Pāṇḍuribhikshus* (naked ascetics), the *Maskarins* (*parivrājaka*), the *Varṇins* (*brahmachārins*), the *Bhāgavatas* and *Pañcharātrikas* (Vaishṇava ascetics), the *Śaivas* and *Keśaluñchhakas* (ascetics who pulled out their hair); atheists like the *Lokāyatikas* (*Chārvākas*), philosophers like the Kapilas, Kaṇādas, Aupanishadas (Vedāntins), and *Aiśvarakāraṇikas* (*Naiyāyikas*); experts in law (*Dharmaśāstra*), linguistics (*śābda*), and the Purānas; experts in rituals (*saptatantavāḥ*); and even experts in the material sciences, the metallurgists (*Karandhamins*). Buddhist learning was also represented in this Brahmanical school. There were students of the *Śākya-Śāsanas* (Buddhist law), followers of Three Refuges (*Triśaraṇa*) who performed the ritual of the *chaitya* (*chaitya-karma*), and those who specialized in Vasubandhu's *Kośa* and *Bodhisattva-Jātakas*.[93]

Most of these students were ascetics. As stated by Hiuan Tsang:

> 'Though their family be in affluent circumstances, such men make up their minds to be like vagrants and get their food by begging as they go about. With them, there is honour in knowing truth, and there is no disgrace in being destitute. The rulers treating them with ceremony and respect cannot make them come to court.'

Hiuan Tsang further tells us that these ascetics were not anti-social recluses but were anxious to render social service as teachers. 'Forgetting fatigue, they expatiate in the arts and sciences.' They travelled long distances in search of more advanced teachers. Thus these travelling scholars were the real educators of thought in those days.[94]

Though Brahmanism had been the predominant religion of India, especially after the impetus given to it by the Gupta Emperors, Buddhism was also quite flourishing. It was represented by as many as 18 different sects, besides its main divisions into Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna. Between these various schools there were about 5,000 monasteries seen by the Chinese pilgrim in India in working order as so many Buddhist colleges where Buddhist monks were in actual residence, of whom the total number all over India, including Cey-

93 *HC*, Tr. 236. 94 *HTW*, I, 161.

lon, works out to be something like 2,12,130 on the basis of Hiuan Tsang's totals for different sects and monasteries in different centres.

X. UNIVERSITY OF NĀLANDĀ[95]

The largest monastery of the times was what is called in the inscriptions *Śrī-Nālandā-Mahāvihāra,* the central *Vihāra* or University of Nālandā, with which were linked up the smaller residential colleges or *vihāras* located in the same University town. As Nālandā was a seat of Brahmanical learning as well as Buddhist, it is called in some of the inscriptions a *Mahāgrahāra.* In the time of Harsha and of Hiuan Tsang's visit, the University seems to have been in its most flourishing condition. The Chinese pilgrim was himself a resident student of the University for about two years,[96] and has written about it from his direct and intimate knowledge of its working. He states that the number of its students always 'came up to 10,000, who were taught by more than 1,500 teachers'. The resident students included foreign scholars from different countries such as Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Tukhāra, Tibet, China and Ceylon. They came to Nālandā for higher study and research. Thus Nālandā was a University for post-graduate studies. It was a unique institution in its large number of students seeking not elementary or intermediate but post-graduate, advanced learning.

The enthusiasm of the foreign scholars for India's knowledge and wisdom made them face undaunted the enormous risks of the overland journey to India. Hiuan Tsang himself states that 'alone he had crossed trackless wastes, and bravely climbed mountains high beyond conjecture, even chilled by icy wind and cold with eternal snow'.

This vast University population was accommodated in its many buildings which, as stated by Hiuan Tsang, were the gifts of kings. He saw at least seven monasteries and eight halls. The monasteries were of several storeys whose 'upper rooms tower above the clouds'. The University was maintained by the gift of villages with their revenues remitted in its favour. According to Hiuan Tsang the king of the country, probably Harsha, alone made a gift to the University of 100 villages. He also made a further gift to the University of a *vihāra* or temple of brass or bronze about a hundred feet in height.

The resident students of the University were provided with free food, clothing, bedding and medicine, besides of course free tuition.

95 For Hiuan Tsang's Account cf. *Life,* 112 ff; *HTB,* II, 167 ff; *HTW* II, 164. For a detailed account of the University, cf. *The University of Nālandā* by H. D. Sankalia (Madras, 1934); *JM,* XIII, 1471.

96 *HTW,* IX, 335.

The University's food supply of rice, milk and butter came from the villages belonging to it. According to Hiuan Tsang, the University's daily supply of food amounted to 'several hundred *piculs* of ordinary rice and several hundred *catties* in weight of butter and milk'. One *picul* is taken to be equivalent to 133 lbs = 66 1/2 srs—say, roughly, 1½ md. One *catty*=160 lbs=80 srs—roughly 2 mds.[97] If 'several hundred' is taken to be even 300, then the daily supply of rice for the University would amount to about 450 mds, and of butter and milk to about 600 mds.

The fame of Nālandā as a seat of learning was due to that of its teachers. The Head of the University in the time of Hiuan Tsang and Harsha was the Brāhmaṇa scholar, Śīlabhadra, who was a prince of Samataṭa, but renounced his kingdom and became a *yogī*. He was the highest authority in the theory and practice of *yoga,* which Hiuan Tsang came all the way from China to Nālandā to learn at his feet. Śīlabhadra was associated in his work with several other distinguished teachers among whom Hiuan Tsang singles out Dharmapāla, the previous President of Nālandā, Guṇamati, Sthiramati,[98] Prabhāmitra, Jinamitra and Jñānachandra. Dharmapāla was a native of Kāñchī, taught at Nālandā for seven years, and went to Suvarṇadvīpa in his old age.

The teachers of the University delivered between them every day as many as 100 lectures or discourses, 'and the students attend those discourses without any fail, even for a minute'. These 100 lectures must have been delivered on 100 different subjects studied by 100 different classes at the University.

The method of study prescribed was appropriate for higher learning and research. It was the method of discussion and interrogation which roused the keenest interest in the students. It was not a dull process and their interest and enthusiasm did not flag. As noted by Hiuan Tsang, 'learning and discussing they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other; juniors and seniors mutually helped to perfection'.

These discussions were carried on by Seminar classes where they were rendered very effective by the proportion of the number of teachers to taught, viz 1:6. It gave a scope to the individual treatment of a pupil by his teacher and to intimate personal touch between them, as against the system of mass-instruction imparted by

97 *Life,* 113 *n.* 1, 2. According to Sir Francis Younghusband 1,000 *catties* were equivalent to 1,380 pounds and thus one *catty* was less than 1½ lbs (*The Heart of a Continent,* p. 18).

98 Watters thinks that the reference is to Sthilamati who was a contemporary of Dharmapāla, while Sthiramati must have lived before A.D. 400 (*HTW,* II, 169).

the individual teacher to a large number of students herded together in that arbitrary and artificial abstraction called a *class,* formed by treating as equals those whom Nature has made unequal.

The students of the time covered a wide field of knowledge, Brahmanical and Buddhist, sacred and secular, philosophical and practical, science and arts. Besides Mahāyāna, Nālandā offered instruction in the works belonging to the eighteen sects, and not only so, but even in 'ordinary works, such as the Vedas and other books, the *Hetuvidyā* (Logic), *Śabdavidyā* (Philology), the *Chikitsāvidyā* (Medicine), the works on magic or *Atharvaveda,* and the *Sāṁkhya*'. Hiuan Tsang 'penetrated, and examined completely, all the collection (of Buddhist books), and also studied the sacred books of Brāhmaṇas during five years'.[99]

This wide diversity of studies professed by students belonging to different communities and countries, sects, and creeds, did not at all affect the harmony of University life, which was characterized by a catholic and cosmopolitan outlook. Hiuan Tsang has recorded that, during seven centuries of its history, there did not occur a single case of 'a guilty rebellion' against the Institution.

XI. HARSHA'S LEARNING AND RELIGION

According to I-tsing, Harsha 'versified the story of the Bodhisattva Jīmūtavāhana and had the play called *Nāgānanda* set to music and performed by a band accompanied by dancing and acting'.[100] Two other dramas are also ascribed to him, viz *Ratnāvalī* and *Priyadarśikā* which contain internal evidence of his authorship. Harsha was at once a poet and a patron of poets like Bāṇa, Mayūra, the author of *Sūryaśataka,* and Divākara, as mentioned in Śārṅgadhara's *Paddhati.* He is also recognized in later literature, and is classed with other royal poets like Muñja and Bhoja by Soḍḍhala in his *Udayasundarī-kathā,* which describes him as *gīr-harsha* (one whose joy lay in composition) and as one who honoured Bāṇa by gift of 100 crores of gold-pieces. Jayadeva, in his *Prasannarāghava,* mentions him along with poets like Bhāsa and Kālidāsa, Bāṇa and Chora (Bilhaṇa), to whom the *Subhāshita-ratna-bhāṇḍāra* adds Māgha, Mayūra, Bhāravi, Bhavabhūti, Bhojarāja, Daṇḍin and Subandhu.

Some later works doubt Harsha's authorship of the works attributed

99 *Life,* 125. As Hiuan Tsang did not altogether reside more than two years at Nālandā (*Life,* 154; *HTW,* II, 335) the period of five years obviously includes the time he spent in learning these subjects in other places.

100 *IRT,* 163.

to him: e.g. *Kāvyaprakāśa* of Mammaṭa (eleventh century A.D.) hints at Harsha's donation to Dhāvaka (in some MSS. Bāṇa) for composing a work for him. But the doubt is too late to be true.

As we have seen, Harsha's religion was Śaivism to which he adhered for long. The Banskhera and Madhuban inscriptions of A.D. 628 and 631 still describe him as *parama-māheśvara.* His capital had temples of Chaṇḍī and Mahākāla. He offered worship to god *Nīla-lohita* (Rudra-Śiva) before embarking on his campaigns. It was Hiuan Tsang who apparently first converted him to Mahāyāna Buddhism about A.D. 643. Even as a Buddhist he had considerable catholicity in patronizing other religions, as seen in the account of his Assemblies.

XII. PUBLIC WORKS

Hiuan Tsang makes a remarkable reference to Harsha's measures for public welfare. 'In all the highways of the towns and villages throughout India he erected hospices (*puṇyaśālās*), provided with food and drink, and stationed there physicians with medicines for travellers and poor persons round about, to be given without any stint.'[101] Here Harsha perhaps even beat Aśoka whose rest-houses are not known to have offered to travellers free food and medical aid.

Bāṇa thus sums up and pays an eloquent tribute in his inimitable words to the contributions made by Harsha to the moral and material progress of the country:

> 'Beneath his rule the Golden Age seemed to bud forth in close packed lines of sacrificial posts, the evil time to flee in the smoke of sacrifices meandering over the sky, heaven to descend in stuccoed shrines, Dharma to blossom in white pennons waving over temple minarets, the villages to bring forth a progeny of beautiful arbours erected on their outskirts for meetings, alms houses, inns, and women's marquees.'[102]

The moral and material progress of the country achieved under Harsha was best seen at his capital at Kanauj which then supplanted Pāṭaliputra as the premier city of Northern India, with its extension of four miles, its strong defences, its lofty structures, beautiful gardens and tanks, its museum of varieties collected from strange lands; inhabitants wearing glossy silk, their devotion to learning and arts, their clear and suggestive discourses, and the number of well-to-do classes and families of great wealth, as described by Hiuan Tsang.[103]

101 *HTB,* I, 213.
102 *HC,* Tr., 102.
103 *HTW,* I, 340.

Hiuan Tsang also saw at Kanauj 100 Buddhist monasteries as against only two seen by Fa-hien about two centuries earlier.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY OF HARSHA'S REIGN

The year 1 of Harsha era is A.D. 606. According to Hiuan Tsang Harsha was engaged on his campaign and conquests for 6 years, i.e. up to A.D. 612. His contest with Pulakeśin II would thus also be over by A.D. 612, and this seems to be confirmed by the Haidarabad Grant, dated in that year, which mentions the new title *Parameśvara* won by the latter by defeating 'the Lord of the whole of *Uttarāpatha*'. But many scholars do not accept this view and place this campaign against Pulakeśin at a much later date.[104]

According to Hiuan Tsang, Harsha was able 'to reign in peace for 30 years without raising a weapon.'[105] From the *Life* we learn that in about A.D. 643 Harsha told the Chinese pilgrim that 'he had been Lord of India for 30 years and more',[106] and further that the quinquennial Assembly held in the spring of A.D. 643 was the sixth held in his region.[107] Thus the first of these Assemblies was held some time after A.D. 612 when all his conquests were completed and followed by an interval during which the normal peace time conditions could be restored. The peace was unbroken for thirty years from A.D. 612 to 642. In A.D. 643, he was out on his expedition to Koṅgoda (Ganjam) when the path of his eastern advance was open after the passing away of Śaśāṅka, as narrated above. Śaśāṅka was not alive in A.D. 637 when Hiuan Tsang visited Magadha. Thus the starting-point of the chronology with which we are concerned is the year of Harsha's accession to sovereignty in A.D. 606. The year A.D. 605-6 witnesed four events: (1) Rājya's expedition against the Hūṇas as Crown Prince; (2) Prabhākara's death; (3) Rājya's accession to the throne; and (4) his assassination on his way to Kanauj. When Rājya was deputed to march against the Hūṇas in A.D. 605, he showed a 'faint growth' of beard, as Bāṇa says. If he is taken to be 20 then, he was born in A.D. 585. According to Bāṇa, he was older by six years than his sister Rājyaśrī who was thus born in A.D. 591. Harsha was also older than his sister, but only by about two years, for when his sister was born, he was able 'to manage five or six paces with the support

104 For a full discussion of the subject, cf. *THK*, 124 ff.
105 *HTW*, II, 343.
106 *Life*, 183.
107 *Life*, 184.

of his nurse's fingers', and 'tiny teeth were beginning to adorn his mouth', as Bāṇa tells us. Thus Harsha was born about A.D. 588 and became a king at 18, the age of majority in Hindu Law. Harsha ruled up to A.D. 648. According to the *Life* (p. 156) he died 'towards the end of Yung Hui period' which ended in A.D. 655 according to Takakusu.[108] But Watters[109] points out that, according to Chinese History, the Chinese envoy to India found a usurper on the throne of Harsha in A.D. 648 when Harsha must have died. Again Hiuan Tsang submitted the account of his Indian travel to Tai Sung in A.D. 648, probably after the passing away of Harsha.

108 *IRT*, 163.
109 *HTW*, I, 347.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CIVILIZATION OF THE GUPTA AGE

I. IMPERIAL PEACE AND HINDU CULTURE

THE ADVENT OF THE GUPTAS on the stage of Indian history ushered in an epoch characterized by great intellectual and material progress, which shone particularly brilliantly on the background of the immediately preceding period. The Gupta Empire can be said to have been essentially Indian—or Hindu—in character. It was heralded by the Vedic chants sung by Brahmanic priests at the *aśvamedha* sacrifice performed by Samudra-gupta after a considerable lapse of time. The Imperial Guptas created conditions which freed the people from fear, and guaranteed them considerable economic and social security. This fact naturally resulted in a remarkable outburst of the creative activity of Hindu genius. In the realms of art and literature, in political and economic enterprises, in religious and philosophical speculations, in short, in almost every sphere of life, we get, in this period, the best and the highest of which the ancient Indians were capable. It was an age of unique and most typically Indian achievements in the realms of thought and deed, and amply deserves to be called the Golden Age of Indian History.

The conception of 'empire' cannot be said to have been a new one in Indian political thought, but a special significance attached to the Gupta Empire in as much as it practically gave the death-blow to the republican form of government which had been a distinguished feature of Indian polity for more than a thousand years. Invasions from without and growth of empires within the country were mainly responsible for the downfall of the republics, and we find that, under the Guptas, most of them came to be gradually absorbed into the larger governmental scheme of the Gupta Empire (p. 23).[1]

The great virtue of the Gupta Empire lay in its unifying effect. An emperor, an army and a bureaucracy controlled from the centre were the chief bonds of the imperial unity, and the external pomp and glory of the emperor, the symbol of this unity, were displayed, in all imperial dominions, through the members of the royal family who held viceregal positions there. Another significant result of such cen-

1 For a different view on this point, cf. pp. 105-6 above.

tral political and military organization was that, under the Imperial Guptas, the country was made free from the danger of foreign invasions. But by far the greatest achievement of the Gupta Empire was the propagation and active promotion of Indian art and thought, which the Gupta emperors had made possible, even in the remotest parts of the country, perhaps through the agency of the *agrahāras* or religious endowments.

II. GREATER INDIA

But though India had become almost free from foreign invasions, she was not altogether cut off from the outside world. As a matter of fact, intercourse both with the West and the East became closer and more frequent than ever before. But it was of a peaceful nature. Friendly political contacts were actively promoted between the Gupta sovereigns and foreign rulers, an interesting example of which is furnished by the case of Meghavarṇa, king of Ceylon (p. 27). These friendly relations seem to have continued even between Chandragupta II and Kumāra-gupta I on the one hand and their Ceylonese contemporaries, Buddhadāsa, Upatissa I, and Mahānāma on the other.[2] There is also sufficient evidence to show that Indian ambassadors were sent to foreign countries during the Gupta regime.[3] The emperors Constantine and Julian are reported to have received, at their courts, ambassadors from India in A.D. 336 and A.D. 361 respectively. From the records of the Sung dynasty we know that an Indian ambassador reached China in A.D. 428. Another ambassador from Western India is said to have attended the court of the Chinese Emperor, Hio-wen-ti, in A.D. 477. Twenty-five years later we hear of an ambassador, by name Chu-lot, who was sent to China by one Kiu-to (probably, Gupta).

The contact between India and outside world had indeed begun to develop already in the pre-Gupta period. That epoch saw this intercourse in two main directions. Certain foreign races, like the Śakas, invaded India, temporarily ruled over a part of the country, and were ultimately absorbed into the Indian community. They came as foreigners but remained as Indians. Of more far-reaching significance, however, were the cultural and commercial contacts, which led to the birth of Greater India. The pre-Gupta period was characterized by the gradual spread of Indian cultural activities, particularly in the fields of art, letters and religion, outside India. The vanguards of this movement were the bands of Buddhist and Brahmanical missionaries,

2 Geiger, *Cūlavaṁsa*,, *PTS*, No. 20, Intr., p. xi.
3 *NPP*, 49 (1-4), pp. 271-72.

who were inspired by the noble ideal of carrying the message of Indian spiritual culture to distant lands beyond the mountains and across the seas. Their forward march towards Tibet, Central Asia, China, and Japan to the north and Indo-china and Malay Archipelago to the east and south was but a silent drift of an enormous religious and civilizing movement, and wherever they went, these ambassadors were received with open arms by the people of those regions. From the first centuries of the Christian era, the Indian ocean served as a popular highway of migration and trade. In the wake of the missionaries followed also political adventurers, who, in the course of time, settled down and established kingdoms in certain parts, particularly in Indo-china and the Malay Archipelago. This remarkable enterprise of colonization outside India seems to have been specially encouraged by the Gupta sovereigns, and the result of all this was that, in the age of the Guptas, several small colonial kingdoms came to be established in South-eastern Asia. From the cultural point of view, they may be regarded almost as the reproductions of Indian conditions; indeed they were smaller Indias across the seas. Without going into the details of this great colonizing activity, of which a fuller account is given in Ch. XXXII, we may emphasize its own outstanding characteristic, namely, that the driving force behind it was neither the imperial ambition for overseas expansion, nor economic exploitation aided by military power; it was the natural efflorescence of the most creative period of Indian culture.

III. THE IDEAL OF KINGSHIP

The Guptas had developed a highly efficient administrative machinery, and its sphere of operations extended over a large part of the life of the contemporary Indian. The Gupta sovereigns claimed for themselves some sort of divinity and this is indicated by the description of some of the Gupta monarchs in their inscriptions, as equalling the gods, Kubera, Varuṇa, Indra, and Yama, and also as gods in mortal form (above, p. 34). It is true that normally no king of ancient India was ever actually worshipped as a god in his lifetime. But in the literature produced in the age of the Guptas, the king is represented as the incarnation of *Dharma,* and as the earthly counterpart of Vishṇu, the God in his aspect as the Preserver. With the downfall of the republics and their gradual absorption into the Gupta Empire, the truly Hindu ideal of a *sārvabhauma* or a *chakravartin* came to be definitely established in Indian political thought. Kālidāsa, who may be regarded as the best interpreter of the Gupta Age, has often glorified this ideal in his works.[4] His descriptions of

4 Cf. *Raghuvaṁśa,* II, 47; *Śakuntalā,* VII, 33.

imperial sovereignty seem to echo what the epithets in the Gupta inscriptions and the legends on the Gupta coins indicate.[5] The entire world, by which obviously they meant India, was thus included in the conception of the *Chakravartin,* the world-sovereign.

From the works of Kālidāsa, which may be presumed to be reflecting the culture of the Gupta Age, to a large extent, we can glean a few facts pertaining to the different aspects of the career of a contemporary king. Special efforts were made to give proper theoretical education and practical training to a prince, so that, after having gone through that discipline, he became fit to assume the responsibilities of an heir-apparent, and subsequently, of a king.[6] The personal accomplishments of Samudra-gupta and Chandra-gupta II in literary, artistic, martial and diplomatic spheres, to which frequent references are made in the inscriptions, indicate the wide range of subjects taught to princes. When Kālidāsa tells us[7] that Dilīpa was learned without being a demagogue, strong without being spiteful, and charitable without being a braggart, he seems to refer, as a matter of fact, to the virtues acquired and the vices avoided by his Gupta patrons. Through the descriptions of the great kings belonging to the race of Raghu,[8] Kālidāsa has indicated how the personal life of a Gupta monarch must have been properly regularized and apportioned for the carrying out of royal duties and the enjoyment of private pleasures.

IV. ECONOMIC CONDITION

1. *Growth of cities*

The result of the highly organized and efficient administration of the Guptas was to be clearly seen in the prosperity and happiness of their subjects. The economic stability and development formed, as a matter of fact, the true basis of the all-round cultural progress made in that period of history. To begin with, that period saw a rapid growth of prosperous cities. The Gupta inscriptions support Fa-hien's testimony to the effect that Magadha was a flourishing kingdom with rich towns possessing large population. Pāṭaliputra, which was the imperial capital, must have been also the centre of all economic activities. Next in importance was perhaps Ayodhyā, which was probably the seat of a *Jayaskandhāvāra* as early as the time of Samudra-gupta and gradually rose to the position of the

5 Cf. *Prithivīm-avajitya divaṁ jayati aprativāryavīryaḥ.*
6 Cf. *Raghuvaṁśa,* III, 35.
7 *Ibid.,* I, 22.
8 *Ibid.,* 1, 5-8.

second capital of the empire. Ujjayinī also seems to have attained the rank of a capital city in the time of Chandra-gupta II. It is probable that Chandra-gupta II, after having conquered that part of the country, became particularly fascinated by that city, and treated it as his second capital. It is likely that this was necessitated by the special exigencies of administration, caused by wars against the Śakas and the re-organization of the newly acquired territory in that region. Ujjayinī soon became the centre of all cultural activities and has, since then, been immortalized in the annals of ancient India as the seat of Vikramāditya and the Nine Gems in his court. Gargarā-taṭa-pura, which was a city situated on the banks of the river Gargarā, is described, in an inscription,[9] as having been adorned with wells, tanks, temples, worship-halls, pleasure-gardens, etc. Daśapura (Mandasor in Western Malwa) was a flourishing town, where a guild of silk-weavers migrated from the Lāṭa province, being attracted by the virtues of the sovereign.[10] Airikina (Eran) is described as the *svabhoganagara* (pleasure-resort) of Samudra-gupta.[11] Vaiśālī, where a large number of Gupta seals have been discovered, seems to have been an important industrial and administrative centre.[12] Among other cities mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions are Indrapura,[13] and Girinagara.[14] It is needless to add that all these cities were adorned with buildings and temples of great architectural beauty. It must be mentioned, in this connection, that prominent sea-ports, like Tāmralipti on the eastern coast, and Bhṛigukachchha on the western coast, were the main centres of sea-borne trade and commerce, and thus played an important part in the economic life of the country.

2. *Guilds*

The Gupta sovereigns seem to have made special efforts to develop industrial and commercial settlements in various parts of their dominions, by offering concessions and patronage to guilds, i.e. corporations of artisans and merchants. A typical example is that of the guild of silk-weavers who migrated from Lāṭa to Daśapura in Western Malwa. There they flourished in their business under the patronage of the Gupta monarch; and, perhaps, in grateful remembrance of this event, they built in that city a 'noble and unequalled' temple of the Sun-god in A.D. 437, with the large amounts of wealth acquired

9 *CII*, III, 72; *Sel. Ins.* p. 383, f.n. 5.
10 *Ibid.*, 79.
11 *Ibid.*, 18.
12 *ASR*, 1903-4, p. 107.
13 *CII*, III, 68.
14 *Ibid.*, 56.

by them through their craft.[15] Another guild, namely, that of oilmen, which carried on prosperous trade in the town of Indrapura,[16] was designated after its head Jīvanta. There is enough epigraphic evidence to show that the guilds were often mobile and moved from one place to another in order to improve their prospects. The unity of the members was the very essence of these guilds, as is indicated by the stipulation, in the above-mentioned record, that '(the temple of) the Sun (is) the perpetual property of the guild of oilmen, of which Jīvanta is the head, residing at Indrapura, as long as it continues in complete unity, (even) in moving away from this settlement.'[17] The Mandasor inscription[18] shows that the guilds usually carried on prosperous business, and, in spite of occasional setbacks, often enjoyed quite a long career of useful activity. The details about the guild of silk-weavers given in the inscription are very important for the study of the corporate activities in the age of the Guptas. We are told that several members of that guild, after having migrated to Daśapura, took to various pursuits other than silk-weaving, such as archery, religion, astrology, story-telling and asceticism, while, at the same time, continuing to be members of that guild. It thus becomes clear that the guilds were not necessarily closed corporations of businessmen occupying themselves with one particular business alone, but members were given considerable freedom in the choice of their individual professions and inclinations. It is also to be noted that the members of these commercial guilds were interested not only in their own trade, but also in several other cultural activities. Interesting side-light is thrown by inscriptions[19] on other works of public utility carried out by the various guilds. Such works included the construction of assembly-houses, water-sheds, public gardens, wells, etc., aid given to poor people in the performance of sacrifices and other religious rites, banking business, and trusteeship of public funds and private bequests.

3. *Public Works*

It has to be mentioned in this connection that public works were undertaken and executed also by the State itself for the welfare and prosperity of the people. Reference may specially be made to the repairs of the Sudarśana lake and the connected irrigation plan, carried out in the province of Surāshṭra, under the benevolent rule

15 *Ibid.*, 79.
16 *Ibid.*, 68.
17 *CII*, III, 71.
18 *Ibid.*, 79.
19 *Lüder's List*, Nos. 1133, 1180; *EI*, VIII, 82-86; *CII*, III, 79.

of Skanda-gupta's provincial governor, Parṇadatta, and his son Chakrapālita.[20] When Kālidāsa says[21] that, during the regime of Daśaratha, 'no illness set its foot among his folk', he must have had in his mind, it may be presumed, the measures taken by his imperial patrons in the matter of public health. It may be further presumed that, through his poems and dramas, Kālidāsa gives indications about other works of public utility, carried out by the Gupta sovereigns, such as construction of roads and bridges, improvement of communications, setting up of big and small industries and working of mines, which afforded means of livelihood to a large number of people, the capture of wild elephants and such other animals as were a menace to the neighbouring locality,[22] etc. Endowments of religious as well as of secular character, founded by the Gupta sovereigns, in favour of a community as a whole, or of individuals, as known from epigraphic evidence, are too numerous to be mentioned here.

4. *Industries*

Several industries, even heavy industries, seem to have grown under the patronage of the Imperial Guptas. The casting of the wonderful iron pillar at Meharauli[23] would not have been possible except in a fully equipped iron and steel plant. The Allahabad pillar inscription mentions a large number of weapons, which also must have been manufactured in such iron works. Ship-building was another big industry which had developed in the age of the Guptas, and it must have considerably facilitated the trade and colonizing activities of the Indians in that period. Silk industry was a speciality of the Indians since very early times and reference has already been made to the prosperous guild of silk-weavers of Daśapura.[24] The highly developed conditions of trade and industry, in the age of the Guptas, are clearly indicated also by the elaborate laws of partnership, contract, foreign trade and commerce, and allied topics, prescribed in the *Yājñavalkya-smṛiti.*

A striking indication of the prosperity and the wealth of the Gupta Empire is given by its gold coinage. This prosperity was no doubt due to great progress made in agriculture, rural economy, overland and seaborne trade and commerce, corporate activities in the economic field, and execution of works of public utility. Under the Guptas the country attained to a high state of material civilization, and the national

20 *CII*, III, 56.
21 *Raghuvaṁśa*, IX, 4.
22 *Ibid.*, XVI, 2; XVII, 64 ff.
23 *CII*, III, 139.
24 *Ibid.*, 81.

wealth of the country increased considerably. Just as the political and military organization of the Guptas helped to establish peace and order in their dominions, and thus secured, for the people, freedom from fear, their planned development of national economy ensured, for the country as a whole, freedom from want. Their entire economic policy aimed at creating conditions of economic security for the people as also at raising the general standard of life by increasing the national wealth. The great cultural activities such as those in the fields of art and letters, which characterize the Gupta Age, would not have been possible without such universal economic security and prosperity.

The account of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien provides us with ample first-hand information about the general, political, social and religious conditions in the age of the Guptas. Fa-hien arrived in India in A.D. 399 and remained in this country until A.D. 414. He was thus able to see the very acme of the Gupta imperial glory.

It would appear from the testimony of the Chinese pilgrim that distant parts of the country, on the frontiers of the Gupta Empire, were comparatively desolate. The holy places in North Bihar, which Fa-hien visited, were situated in a wilderness, and he saw only some priests and a few families living near the shrines. The Gangetic plain, however, was well-populated and prosperous. Throughout the imperial dominions, the pilgrim was able to travel in peace and free from fear, and he indirectly pays the highest tribute to the Guptas for the happy condition of India during their regime (above, p. 62).

All sorts of charitable institutions existed and Fa-hien was particularly impressed by 'free hospitals' endowed by benevolence, which he describes in some detail. 'Hither come all poor or helpless patients suffering from every sort of infirmity. They are well taken care of and a doctor attends to them, food and medicine being given according to their wants. Thus they are made quite comfortable, and when they are well they may go away.' It may be claimed without exaggeration that this is the first instance of a free general hospital recorded in the history of the world.

V. REVIVAL OF HINDUISM

By far the most important feature of the Gupta Age was the revival of Brahmanical religion in the form which is now known as Puranic Hinduism. Buddhism gradually lost its dominant position and the resurgence of Hinduism continued unabated ever since. This topic will be dealt with in detail in Ch. XXVIII and we can only refer here to some striking features of that remarkable cultural movement.

Firstly, it becomes clear from the study of the Gupta inscriptions that the Gupta monarchs were imbued with the true spirit of Hinduism, namely, tolerance for other religions. This aspect of the religious policy of the Guptas was to be seen particularly in their attitude towards the Buddhists and the Jainas. Secondly, the new and vigorous Hinduism of the Guptas gave an unprecedented impetus to Sanskrit language and literature. In this connection, it is noteworthy that classical Sanskrit was then deliberately and widely used even for popular and secular purposes, as is clearly evidenced by the royal and private lithic and other records of that period. Moreover, in those days, even the Jainas and the Buddhists discarded the Prakrit and wrote their sacred texts in Sanskrit which thus became the *lingua franca* of India. Thirdly, the wandering Hindu minstrels visited distant parts of the country in the course of pilgrimages recommended by the popular scriptures, and carried the message of Hinduism through the Epics and the Purāṇas directly to the masses. Hinduism proved a significant force in unifying the heterogeneous elements in the country by the common bond of religion. Fourthly, Hinduism had then assumed a positive and an assertive role in the sense that the movements of the Hinduization of foreign tribes, and of the spread of Hinduism in foreign lands, which had already commenced in the preceding period of Indian history, were actively promoted during this period. And finally, Hinduism of the Gupta period was characterized, not only by the new popular forms of religious practices, but also by deep philosophical speculations of a large number of profound thinkers to which reference will be made in Ch. XXVIII.

VI. BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

But the revival of Hinduism was not immediately followed by the decline and downfall of Buddhism. True to their tolerant and eclectic spirit, the Guptas even helped the Buddhist expansion to a certain extent, and Fa-hien found Buddhism flourishing in many parts of India. The contribution made by the Buddhists to literature, philosophy, art and sciences, during the Gupta regime, was indeed marvellous, and it was not a little responsible for making that period the golden age of Indian culture. It was an epoch of a universal cultural awakening in India—an awakening, which was made possible by the best that was in Hinduism as well as in Buddhism. The monuments of Buddhist art of that period are as much representative of that great awakening as the poetry of Kālidāsa. It is interesting to note that Hinduism and Buddhism had come very close to each other in religious practices and beliefs. In the

region of philosophical speculations, the Buddhist thinkers aimed at discovering the unchanging amid change, while their Hindu compatriots carried on a passionate search for the One behind the many. Though, in course of time, the Buddhist religion as such disappeared from India, its special contribution to Indian civilization was of a permanent character.

As in the case of the Buddhists, the Gupta monarchs seem to have extended their patronage impartially also to the Jainas. It would appear from the Jaina inscriptions and literature that Mathura and Valabhi were the centres of the Śvetāmbara Jainas, while the Digambara Jainas had mustered round Puṇḍravardhana. Generally speaking, however, during the Gupta period, the influence of Jainism had been gradually waning in the north, though, in the south, it still continued to be actively promoted and patronized.

In accordance with the general trend in the matter of religion and philosophy, which characterized the Gupta period, the Jainas also reorganized their religious practices and philosophical teachings in those days. The ancient Jaina texts, which had become obscure and disorganized, were rearranged and finally consolidated by a council held at Valabhi by the middle of the fifth century A.D., under the leadership of Devarddhi Kshamaśramaṇa. Like the Mahāyāna Buddhists, the Jainas also felt the necessity of writing Sanskrit commentaries on their original Prakrit scriptures. Some Jaina authors even wrote independent religious and philosophical treatises in Sanskrit.

VII. LITERATURE

1. *Introduction*

No real and adequate idea of the brilliance of the Gupta Age can be conveyed without a somewhat detailed reference to the magnificent achievements of that age in the realms of art and literature. It is now recognized on all hands that in the domain of sculpture and painting the Gupta Age not only produced the best that India can show but also laid down the form and standard of aesthetic ideas for all succeeding ages. In the same way the *belles lettres,* particularly poems and dramas, as well as the treatises on technical and scientific subjects constitute the high-watermark of literary art and intellectual achievements in India.

In view of the importance of these two topics for a clear realization of the glory of the Gupta Age, they are treated here in some details, so that it may not be necessary to refer to them again in the subsequent chapters dealing in a general way with art and literature of the period covered by this volume.

2. *Growth of Sanskrit Literature*

Few scholars would now subscribe to the view, once propounded by Max Müller, that there was a sudden break in the growth of Sanskrit literature in the early centuries of the Christian era, until Kālidāsa inaugurated 'the Renaissance' of Sanskrit literature. This theory is definitely disproved by the works of Aśvaghosha, Bhāsa and Bharata, among others, to which reference has been made above, as well as the epigraphic records composed in Sanskrit. Nevertheless, it must be conceded that the Gupta Age constitutes a new epoch in the history of Sanskrit literature. It reached its perfection in both form and content, and almost all the best works in its different branches were composed before the end of that glorious period. It may be called the great age of Sanskrit also from another point of view. For Sanskrit now replaced Prakrits not only in epigrapic, but, as noted above, even in the religious and philosophical literature of the heterodox sects like the Jainas and Buddhists. Sanskrit, which became the *lingua franca* of India, formed the one sure basis of a common culture in India, in Indo-China and Indonesia. Sanskrit became the language of the learned, and retained the position of supremacy for a thousand years.

3. *Brahmanical Literature*

The Gupta Age thus witnessed not the renaissance or revival, but the acme or efflorescence of Sanskrit literature. The continuity of the literary tradition is best marked in the field of the Brahmanical literature. For one of the foremost literary activities of the Gupta Age is to be seen in the final redaction of at least one of the two great Epics, viz the *Mahābhārata*, as well as the development of the Purāṇas and Smṛiti or Dharmaśāstra literature. Although the beginnings of these two belong to a much earlier period, some of the notable works in both were composed or received their final form during the age under review. The same thing is also true of the philosophical literature, though to a much less extent. In the Dharmaśāstra literature[25] the *Yajñavalkya-smṛiti* may be regarded almost as the official law-book of the Guptas. Another important Dharmaśāstra-work, which belongs to the Gupta period, is the *Nārada-smṛiti*. It seems to have been a slightly earlier production

25 As regards the dates suggested for the different Dharmasūtras and Dharmaśāstras, P. V. Kane (*History of Dharmaśāstra*) suggests the following dates (*Ed.*):

Yājñavalkya-smṛiti	A.D.	100 — 300
Bṛihaspati-smṛiti	A.D.	300 — 500
Nārada-smṛiti	A.D.	100 — 400

than the *Yājñavalkya-smṛiti* and depends primarily on the *Bhṛigu-saṁhitā,* thus confirming the *Purāna*-tradition about *Bhṛigu, Nārada, Bṛihaspati,* and *Aṅgiras* being the successive redactors of Manu's *Dharmaśāstra.* At the same time, the *Nārada-smṛiti* shows considerable advance over the *Bhṛigu-saṁhitā;* it speaks of 132 sub-sections of Manu's 18 titles of law, of 15 kinds of slavery, of 21 kinds of acquisition, of 11 kinds of witnesses, etc. This, together with the fact that the word *dīnāra* (*denarius*), in the sense of a coin, occurs in it, would prove that the *Nārada-smṛiti* belonged to the early fourth century A.D.[26] To a slightly later date belongs the *Bṛihaspati-smṛiti* which represents, in certain respects, an advance over the *Nārada.* On the whole, however, the *Bṛihaspati-smṛiti* also follows the *Manu-smṛiti* very closely, and may, therefore, be regarded, in a sense, as a *vārttika* on the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra.* It will thus be seen that, as in the case of several other departments of Hindu life and culture, the Guptas seem to have actively sponsored a movement for the reorientation also of legal thought and procedure in the light of the changing conditions.

The original texts of several other Smṛiti works were also probably composed during the Gupta Age, though they probably underwent considerable modifications at later periods. According to the chronology adopted by Kane, the latest writer on the subject, the following Smṛiti works belong to this class: Parāśara (A.D. 100-500); Kātyāyana (A.D. 400-600); Pitāmaha (A.D. 400-700); Pulastya (A.D. 300-700); Vyāsa (A.D. 200-500); and Hārīta (A.D. 400-700).[27]

The nature of the Purāṇa literature and its beginnings have been dealt with in the preceding volume. But the Gupta Age witnessed not only new Purāṇa texts, but also considerable modifications of the old ones.

4. *Purāṇas*

The Purāṇas were an active and efficient medium of popular instruction, kept up to date by constant revision. Under the pressure of new demands, the Purāṇa outgrew the old *pañchalakshaṇa,* and began to attract matter relating to Dharmaśāstra, details of the worship of particular deities, resumes of philosophical doctrine, and what

26 The word 'dīnāra' is commonly used first in the Gupta inscriptions. The *Nārada-smriti* is definitely earlier than the 7th century A.D., as it is referred to in Bāṇa's *Kādambarī.*

27 This para is a summary of passages in the original Chapter. In the latest volume of the work (Vol. V, Part II) cited in f.n. 25 Kane says: 'Most of the metrical Smṛitis, such as those of Parāśara, Śankha and Devala', belong to A.D. 600-900 (*Editor*).

not. The number of Purāṇas increased, and sometimes several texts competed for one and the same name and for a place among the recognized list of eighteen main Purāṇas, e.g. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* and *Devī-Bhāgavata.* The views of the new sects now found expression in the Purāṇa texts; to wit, a Pāśupata in *Vāyu* and *Liṅga;* Sāttvata in *Vishṇu;* Dattātreya in *Mārkeṇḍeya;* Sun worship as practised by the Magas, Bhojakas and Śakadvīpi immigrants in *Bhavishya* and *Sāmba. Māhātmyas* of particular shrines and places of pilgrimages (*tīrthas*) came to be added to old texts as new sections. Dissertations on various branches of secular knowledge were also incorporated in the Purāṇa texts. The *Agni* is a thesaurus of poetics, dramaturgy, grammar, lexicography, astronomy and astrology, polity, war, architecture, medicine and so on; the *Garuḍa* takes note, in addition, of perfumery and the lapidary art, and the *Vishṇudharmottara*, of the arts of dance, painting and sculpture. These prove the popular character of the Purāṇa texts which now formed the most important medium of popular education. Some of the Purāṇas contain a brief account of the royal dynasties of Northern India. These lists are found in *Matsya, Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa, Bhavishya, Vishṇu* and *Garuḍa*, and must have been put in their present shape between the fourth and seventh centuries A.D., as they do not come up to the reign of Harshavardhana in any sentence. Very remarkable is a sixth or seventh century manuscript, in later Gupta characters, found in the Nepal Darbar library, of the *Skanda-Purāṇa,* which naturally differs very much from the swollen and amorphous mass that now bears the name.

5. *Belles Lettres*

(a) *Kāvya*: The literary works mentioned above represent the great movement relating to the final revision and editing of ancient Brahmanic texts and further additions to them which was vigorously sponsored by the Guptas. It undoubtedly formed a significant aspect of the general development of Sanskrit language and literature in that age. But in order to realize the true beauty, grandeur and splendour of the literary efflorescence in the age of the Guptas, we have to turn up the *belles lettres*, for the age of the Guptas was essentially the age of dramatic, lyrical and epic poetry. By far the most outstanding name associated with that age is that of Kālidāsa, whose unquestioned supremacy, unanimously recognized today, is further clearly established by two facts: firstly, most of the earlier classical writers, however great by themselves, were almost entirely relegated to oblivion by this great luminary; and, secondly, the literary fashion started by Kālidāsa in the matter of form and con-

tent was assiduously imitated by most of the later writers, who thereby paid him a well-deserved tribute.

That Kālidāsa lived in the fourth century A.D. and was a contemporary of Chandra-gupta II, Vikramāditya, is now generally accepted by scholars, though some still cling to the traditional view that the great poet lived in the court of the great Vikramāditya of Ujjain who founded the Samvat (era) in 57 B.C.[28]

Kālidāsa's literary genius was a versatile one, and it is difficult to say whether he should be regarded as a dramatist first and a lyrical and epic poet afterwards, or *vice versa.* Among Kālidāsa's poems, the *Ṛitusaṁhāra* is always mentioned—and rightly so—as his earliest production. The poet describes, in that poem, in a very picturesque manner, the beauties of six seasons and their reaction on the human mind. On account of the utter lack in it of the ethical quality, which characterizes Kālidāsa's other literaary works, some critics have altogether denied his authorship of the *Ṛitusaṁhāra.* On the other hand, the *Ṛitusaṁhāra* exhibits certain aesthetic and poetical features, which unmistakably show the author of the *Meghadūta* in the making. The delicate observation of, and the living sympathy with, nature are truly Kālidāsian in character. Only the strong passion, seen in this youthful production, has substantially mellowed in his later works.

Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* is the pioneer *dūtakāvya* in Sanskrit literature, and the fact that a large number of imitations of this *kāvya* has been produced in later times is a clear testimony to its eternal enchantment. While a youthful husband, torn away from his spouse, by a sentence of lonely banishment, wanders about disconsolately, lamenting his hard fate, his attention is caught by the sudden appearance of a cloud. Ignoring, in his infatuation, the inanimate nature of the cloud, he requests it to carry his message to his beloved wife, living far away. The stanzas in which Kālidāsa depicts the pining human heart are unrivalled for lofty imagery, unique metaphors and heroic hyperboles—not only in Sanskrit, but, perhaps, in any language of the world.

To turn from the *Ritusaṁhāra* and the *Meghadūta* to the *Kumārasambhava* and the *Raghuvaṁśa* is to turn from lyrical beauty to epic grandeur.

In the *Kumārasambhava,* which describes the union of Śiva and Pārvatī in wedlock and the birth of their son Kumāra or Kārtika, Kālidāsa exhibits richer variety and greater brilliance of fancy. The three main characters, namely, Śiva, Pārvatī and Madana are

28 For the date of Kālidāsa, cf. A *History of Sanskrit Literature,* Classical Period, Vol. I (by S. N. Das Gupta and S. K. De), pp. 124-25 and *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (by A. B. Keith), pp. 80-81.

delineated with an extraordinary power of suggestion, and the grand background of the Himālayas adds sublimity to the whole theme. The poet's power of description makes every scene appear to move before our very eyes.

The *Raghuvaṁśa* is universally recognized as the finest specimen of Sanskrit *mahākāvya*. It is a true court-epic, and all of its nineteen cantos are at once dignified and entertaining. The poet describes, in this *kāvya*, the careers of twenty-eight kings belonging to the race of Raghu. He has successfully tried to sustain the interest throughout this long poem by introducing in it quite a large number of fascinating episodes and by enlivening them with a rich variety of attractive characters. Considering the uniform propriety of sentiment and style, exhibited in the *Raghuvaṁśa*, it must be considered to have been the fruit of Kālidāsa's mature literary genius. According to one literary tradition, Kālidāsa is believed to have written for king Pravarasena—or at least revised for him—the Prakrit poem *Setubandha*. Kālidāsa's part in connection with that poem, if any, seems however to have been not very substantial.

Besides the two epic poems of Kālidāsa, which are by far the most eminent representatives of real court-poetry, only two other poems, belonging to this class, may be mentioned as having been produced during the age of the Guptas. The epic poem, *Jānakīharaṇa*, which deals with the life of Rāma up to the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa, is traditionally ascribed to Kumāradāsa, who is said to have been the king of Ceylon between A.D. 517 and 526.[28a] Both in manner and general treatment of the subject, Kumāradāsa imitates Kālidāsa, without being able, even remotely, to approach the latter's height and grandeur.

Next in point of time is Bhāravi (*c.* A.D. 550) whose epic, *Kirātārjunīya*, is reckoned among the five famous *mahākāvyas*. The poet gives in eighteen cantos the story of the fight between Arjuna and Lord Śiva, who had disguised himself as a *Kirāta*. This is indeed a grand epic theme, and Bhāravi has expounded it with considerable art. But it is not the narration of the story that strikes us, in the *Kirātārjunīya*, so much as Bhāravi's power of description and dignity of style. It must, however, be confessed that the many examples of what may be called literary gymnastics, which we come across frequently in this poem, instead of in any way enhancing the poetic effect, distinctly mar it. Bhāravi's art was, no doubt, influenced by Kālidāsa, while his own *Kirātārjunīya* served as a model for

28a King Kumaradāsa of Ceylon (A.D. 508-16) was a different person from the author of the *Jānakīharaṇa* bearing the same name (cf. *History of Ceylon*, Ed. by S. Paranavitana (Colombo, 1959), Part I, p. 393) (*Editor*).

the *Śisupālavadha* of Māgha (later than A.D. 700). It is possible to attribute to the Gupta period also the poem *Rāvaṇavadha* of Bhaṭṭi. This poem, which is more popularly known as the *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, describes, in twenty-two cantos, the history of Rāma, while illustrating, at the same time, the rules of Sanskrit grammar and rhetoric. Bhaṭṭi was known to the rhetorician Bhāmaha and must have lived long before A.D. 641.

A few inscriptions of the Gupta Age also possess in some degree most of the characteristic features of Sanskrit *kāvya*. The first place, from the point of view of literary art, must necessarily be conceded to the panegyric of Samudra-gupta in the Allahabad Pillar inscription. The author of the inscription, Harisheṇa, has handled both prose and verse with considerable mastery, and thus shows himself to be a worthy predecessor of Kālidāsa. Compared to Harisheṇa, Vatsabhaṭṭi, the author of the Mandasor inscription,[29] is certainly an inferior poet. There is, however, no doubt that Vatsabhaṭṭi was sufficiently conversant with the poetic conventions which were then in vogue. The Junagadh rock inscription[30] also contains some beautiful stanzas. Mention must be made in this context also of the Meharauli iron pillar inscription[31] and the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman,[32] the author of which, Vāsula, shows considerable literary merit.

A literary study of the inscriptions of the Gupta period shows that their authors were acquainted with some sort of regular *sāhitya-śāstra*,[33] though no text of this is now available. Although these inscriptions were mainly intended for the people at large, their style is essentially dissimilar to that of the popular epics, and resembles the artificial style of the contemporary court poetry. Further, the authors of most of these inscriptions seem to betray the influence of the greatest literary figure of that period, namely, Kālidāsa.

(*b*) *Drama*: While in the field of Sanskrit epic and lyrical poetry, we do not come across any outstanding figure before Kālidāsa (except, perhaps, to a certain extent, Aśvaghosha) in the field of dramatic literature, we have to reckon with at least two very illustrious and able predecessors of his, namely, Bhāsa and Śūdraka.[34]

29 *CII*, III, 79.
30 *Ibid.*, 56.
31 *Ibid.*, 139.
32 *Ibid.*, 142, 150.
33 The reference *sphuṭamadhurachitrakāntaśabdasamayodārālaṁkṛita* occurring in one of the Gupta epigraphs is quite significant in this connection.
34 It is not possible to estimate adequately the dramatic art of Aśvaghoṣa, some fragments from whose dramas have been recently brought to light.

Reference has already been made to Bhāsa (Vol. II, p. 641). Śūdraka is the author of the famous drama, the *Mṛichchhakaṭika*, which is, in many respects, a unique work in Sanskrit dramatic literature. Though the play is ascribed to a king Śūdraka, the remarks in the *prastāvanā* about Śūdraka himself show it to be the handiwork of a court-poet. There seems to be no doubt that the author of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* has revised and enlarged Bhāsa's romantic play, *Daridra-Chārudatta*, by adding to it the sub-plot relating to the political revolution of Āryaka, which may have been a historically authentic event. Though there is no direct positive evidence to determine the date of this drama, there is enough circumstantial evidence to support the assumption that its author lived in the earlier part of the fourth century A.D.[35] The *Mṛichchhakaṭika* may, therefore, be regarded as one of the earliest literary productions of the Gupta period. The *Mṛichchhakaṭika* belongs essentially to the class of realistic dramas in Sanskrit. Unlike the majority of

35 The author of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* lived after Bhāsa but before Kālidāsa. In the prologue to his *Tapatīsaṁvaraṇa*, Kulaśekhara refers to illustrious ancient dramatists in the following words: *Śūdraka-kālidāsa .... prabhṛtīnāṁ*. The order in which the names of the two dramatists are mentioned here would clearly suggest that Śūdraka was prior in date to Kālidāsa. All the same, Śūdraka does not seem to have lived very much earlier than Kālidāsa. It may be assumed that his fame had not been well established in Kālidāsa's times, otherwise the latter would have referred to Śūdraka as one of his eminent predecessors along with Bhāsa and Saumila (cf. *Mālavikāgnimitra*, I). A more acceptable hypothesis in this connection would be as follows: As indicated above, the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* was not written by Śūdraka at all, but by a court-poet. Rājaśekhara refers to a king Śūdraka, whose exploits were described by his court-poets, Rāmila and Saumila (cf. *tau Śūdrakakathākārau ramyau rāmilasaumilau: kāvyam yayor dvayor āsidardhanārīnarопamam*). This Saumila may have been the same as the one who is mentioned by Kālidāsa along with Bhāsa. The original author of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* must have been Saumila, the court-poet of king Śūdraka, and it must have been only later that the authorship of the drama came to be ascribed to his patron, Śūdraka. Kālidāsa must have lived soon after—or perhaps was a very junior contemporary of Saumila. In Kālidāsa's times, therefore, Saumila was regarded as the author of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika*. This would explain why Kālidāsa mentions him in the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, along with Bhāsa, as one of the eminent dramatists preceding him. It may be further presumed that the real hero of the sub-plot, namely the political revolution of Āryaka, which Saumila introduced into his drama while enlarging the *Daridra-Chārudatta* of Bhāsa, was his patron Śūdraka himself. His name may indicate that Śūdraka had originally belonged to a low class; but later on he became a king as the result of a popular political revolution. While depicting this event through his drama Saumila perhaps thought it desirable to conceal the real name of his patron, and represent him under another euphemistic—but transparent—name. That is how a *Śūdraka* must have become an *Āryaka*. Once Śūdraka was firmly established on the throne there could not have been any objection to reverting to his original name. As a matter of fact the poet later on seems to have gone to the other extreme and claimed that Śūdraka was a *dvijamukhyatama* well-versed in the Veda and other branches of learning (cf. stanzas 3 and 4 in the first act of the Mr.).

Sanskrit dramatists, the author has exhibited in this play a surprising sense of fact, which completely dominates reason or imagination. Particularly in the sub-plot, for which alone he is really responsible, there is no attempt made to unduly invest the characters with a touch of sublimity or grandeur. Action and characters are portrayed directly from life without giving any conscious consideration to their emotional possibilites. The author himself seems to be perfectly conscious of his unconventional treatment of the plot.[36] To glorify a political revolution was in itself a novel thing; and the brilliant and dramatically effective manner in which the active politics of Āryaka is combined with the romantic tale of Chārudatta and Vasantasenā must have immediately caught the imagination of contemporary audiences. For variety of incidents and characters taken from different strata of the society, and the genuine humour, with which they are presented in the drama, there is hardly anything in Sanskrit dramatic literature to compare with the *Mṛichchhakaṭika.*

The *Mudrārākshasa* deals with events immediately following the extermination of the Nandas, and relating to the foundation of an empire by Chandra-gupta Maurya under the guidance and with the help of Chānakya. The actual dramatic interest is created and sustained through the portrayal of the clash between the political strategies and counter-strategies employed by Rākshasa on behalf of Chandra-gupta Maurya. Unlike most Sanskrit dramas, *Mudrārākshasa* concerns itself with interests other than love. Though the sentiment of love, in the ordinary sense, is not represented in this drama, we do have here a fine portrayal of strong passion in the form of loyalty and patriotism. The drama presents a true and surprisingly living picture of an ancient Indian court—with all its political suspicions and intrigues, and the play and counter-play of its emissaries, retainers, and couriers. Though not conforming to the conventional model, the *Mudrārākshasa* must, all the same, be regarded as a great play in its own way.

The second drama by Viśākhadatta, namely, *Devī-Chandra-guptam*[37] has already been discussed in connection with Rāma-gupta (pp. 46 ff.). The *Abhisārikā-vāñchhitaka,* another play of the same

The chronological order of the three dramatists, as indicated by literary tradition, would therefore be: Bhāsa: Saumila (or Śūdraka): Kālidāsa. Besides literary tradition, the circumstantial evidence in connection with the date of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* comprises the astrological references in the sixth act of the play, the Prākrit dialects, the political background, the legal procedure represented in the ninth act, the traditionally indicated proximity of Śūdraka and Vikramāditya, the reference to *rudro rājā* (VIII, 34), etc.

36 Cf. *anyadiva saṁvidhānakam vartate; navamiva saṁvidhānakam* (Act I).

37 *JA*, cc III, 201 ff.

author based on the love-stories of Udayana, is also known only from citations. But, as in epic and lyrical poetry, so too in drama, Kālidāsa must be said to represent the high watermark of India's creative genius. Among Kālidāsa's three plays, the *Mālavikāgnimitra,* based on the conventional theme of love between the Śuṅga king Agnimitra and Mālavikā, is clearly an immature production.

The *Vikramorvaśīya* shows a great advance in Kālidāsa's poetic and dramatic art. The drama depicts, in five acts, the romantic story of the love of a mortal for a nymph. Just a casual hint from a Vedic hymn was enough for Kālidāsa's imaginative power to weave an entire dramatic plot round it. In the portrayal of Purūravas's ardent but hopeless distraction caused by Urvaśī's disappearance, and his mad search for his beloved, the poet has reached a lyrical height unknown to the conventional erotic plays in Sanskrit.

The theme of love reaches its highest consummation in Kālidāsa's third play, the *Abhijñāna-Śakuntalā.* From love, which is depicted, in the *Mālavikāgnimitra,* as a flippant and sensuous passion, and, in the *Vikramorvaśīya,* as an ardent and lyrical—and therefore explosive—emotion ending in distraction, Kālidāsa now turns to love as a whole psychological experience—starting as a heedless, headlong and instinctive attraction between two youthful persons, then undergoing a process of purification through suffering and tribulations of the two souls and culminating into an abiding spiritual sentiment. In the *Śakuntalā,* Kālidāsa treats of love as a factor in the scheme of larger life and not merely as an isolated individual passion. But it is not only this philosophy of love which makes this drama a masterpiece. It is impossible not to recognize the great dramatic genius of Kālidāsa in the regular development of the plot, the just proportions of the cast, the happy choice of the incidents, the majesty and charm of the stage-effects, in his rich imagery and fine appreciation of nature, his grace, his elegance, and, above all, his noble rhythm.

Another notable dramatist in the Gupta Age is *Viśākhadatta.* In the prologue of the *Mudrārākshasa,* we are told that the drama was written by Viśākhadatta, the son of *Mahārāja* Bhāskaradatta and the grandson of *Sāmanta* Vaṭeśvaradatta. From the *bharatavākya* of the same drama we know that Viśākhadatta was a contemporary of a king Chandra-gupta[38]. Some scholars take this king to be Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty,[39] but others place him much later in the sixth or seventh century A.D.

38 There are several readings of the name, but on the basis of a critical study of a number of manuscripts of the play, *Hillebrandt* (*Mudrārākṣasa*: Breslau 1912) has confirmed the correctness of the reading: *candraguptaḥ.*

39 It is suggested (*Mudrārākṣesa* or *The Signet Ring*: edited by R. S. Pandit, New Book Company, Bombay, 1944) that Viśākhadatta belonged to the Datta family,

It will thus be seen that, among the dramatists of the Gupta period, we have representatives both of the romantic and realistic schools of drama. In Kālidāsa's dramas, imagination dominates over sense of fact and reason, while, in the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* and the plays of Viśākhadatta, sense of fact dominates over reason and imagination. Drama, they say, is essentially a literature of the people and for the people. With the solitary exception of the *Mṛichchhakaṭika*, however, the dramas of the Gupta period are distinctly dramas of kings and court life.

The royal courts in the Gupta period afforded the most favourable conditions for the production of such literature. For Gupta monarchs, as mentioned above, were not only patrons of learning and art, but were themselves learned men and artists. The background for the exuberant growth of the epic, lyrical and dramatic literature under the Guptas must have been already prepared by the treatises on *Kāmaśāstra, alaṁkāraśāstra* and *nāṭyaśāstra*, whose prior existence may be reasonably presumed. But far more significant than all these was the revival and the glorification of the Brahmanic ideal, so energetically sponsored by the Guptas. One of the salient features of this cultural movement was what may be fittingly called the apotheosis of the Sanskrit language. There can be no doubt that in the Gupta period, Sanskrit was generally spoken and understood, not only by the cultured people, but also by the populace.[40] The evidence of the popular epics and the Purāṇas, of Sanskrit dramas, and of the many inscriptions and grants,[41] which were essentially intended for the common people, would amply support the foregoing assumption. Sanskrit had already assumed a fixed and unalterable form—a circumstance which distinctly favoured its being used and understood, without much difficulty, in different parts of India. The Prakrits, on the other hand, varied according to local conditions and could therefore be used only as local dialects. Sanskrit thus became the real national language and even the Bauddhas and the Jainas had to adopt it as the most suitable vehicle for their religious and philosophical discourses. This undoubtedly gave the great impetus to Sanskrit language and literature which we find in the Gupta Age.

who were Sāmantas, but who rose to the position of mahārājas in the very next generation. The marriage of a lady from this family, namely, Dattadevī, with Samudra-gupta is presumed to have been the cause of this sudden rise in the position of the family. Viśākhadatta was accordingly not only a contemporary but also a near relative of Chandra-gupta II.

40 The *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* also indicates that kings like Sāhasāṅka of Ujjain had insisted that Sanskrit alone should be employed in their courts and households.

41 We hardly come across any copperplates or lithic inscriptions in Prākrit belonging to a period posterior to the fourth century A.D.

But the peculiar conditions and environments of the Gupta Age had also some bad effect on the literature produced during that period. Under the influence of the royal courts, Sanskrit poetry tended to become more and more aristocratic in character. It reflected the graces as well as the artificialities of court-life. Being overburdened with the many conventions, Sanskrit literature of the period grew more or less like a hot-house plant losing much of its natural vitality. Sentimentality came to be mistaken for genuine sentiment, fancy for real passion and ingenuity for true human feelings. Generally speaking, it attempted to cater to the tastes of the higher and refined classes of the society only, and so remained to that extent isolated from the life of the common people. A comparison of the popular epics with the epic *kāvyas* of the classical period would make this point abundantly clear. The classical poets were unmistakably inclined to become more pedantic than popular, and their appeal was always subtle and roundabout rather than simple and direct.

(c) *Ethical and Didactic Literature*: Even the so-called ethico-didactic literature of that period can hardly be regarded as primarily the literature of the people and for the people. The famous *Tantrākhyāyikā,* for instance, which is essentially of the nature of a storybook, must have been originally composed with a view to imparting to young princes instruction in political science and practical conduct.[42] The *kathāmukha* (introduction) of that work leaves no doubt in this regard. The *Tantrākhyāyikā,* popularly known as the *Pañcatantra,* has indeed had a long and eventful history.[43] There is no doubt that its original text, which must have been made up of a large number of independent and unconnected stories, has undergone considerable modifications in the course of its transmission. And it is through such frequent modifications that the original work on the *nītiśāstra* and the *arthaśāstra* was gradually transformed into a storybook meant for the instruction and edification of the young in general. The original text of the *Tantrākhyāyikā* is of course, not extant, though it is possible for us to form some idea about it from the five oldest versions of the work which are available. These versions are: (1) the *Tantrākhyāyikā* which is available from Kashmir in an old and a new recension; (2) the text from which a Pehlevi translation was prepared *circa* A.D. 570; (3) a portion out of the *Pañchatantra* which was inserted in the *Bṛihatkathā* of Guṇāḍhya, and which is now to be found, in a modified form, in the *Bṛihatkathāmañjarī* of Kshe-

42 The *Tantrākhyāyika* would therefore fall under the category of narrative poetry as well as ethico-didactic poetry.

43 Th. Benfey, *Pañcatantra,* Leipzig, 1859; J. Hertel, *Ober Das Tantrākhyāyika,* Leipzig, 1904; *Tantrākhyāyika,* Berlin, 1909; *Das Pañcatantra,* Berlin, 1914; F. Edgerton, *Pañcatantra Reconstructed,* 1924.

mendra and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* of Somadeva; (4) a text, which may very well be called a children's edition of the *Pañchatantra* and is specially current in South India;[44] and (5) a Nepalese text in verse, which is closer to the South Indian version than to any other. It has been shown by Hertel,[45] on the basis of textual criticism, that all these versions can be traced back to a common ancestor.[46] In the introduction of the *Tantrākhyāyikā,* as well as in all the versions of the *Pañchatantra,* Vishṇuśarmā is mentioned as the author of the work.[47]

The *Tantrākhyāyikā* consists of five books out of which, broadly speaking, the first three contain instruction in politics, while the last two, which give the impression of having remained incomplete, contain general teachings regarding worldly wisdom. So far as its language and style are concerned, the *Tantrākhayāyikā* must be said to belong to the Sanskrit *kāvya*-type. Its prose is often characterized by long compounds, and its verses exhibit several classical *alaṁkāras.* Elegant prose, interspersed with gnomic stanzas, and a complex 'box within a box' style of story-telling are the two characteristics which the *Tantrākhyāyikā* has in common with the artistic narrative literature in classical Sanskrit.

The date of the composition of the *Tantrākhyāyikā* is not known, but it had become, already in the sixth century A.D., a very popular work—so much so that, at the instance of Khasru Anashirwan (A.D. 531-79), it was translated into Pehlevi. On the basis of the Pehlevi translation, were, soon after, prepared the Syrian and the Arabic translations of the work. It may, therefore, be reasonably assumed that the latest limit of the date of the *Tantrākhyāyikā* must be A.D. 500.[48] As for the earliest limit, we have the evidence of the large number of quotations from the *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra,* which the *Tantrākhyāyikā*

44 This must have got ready after the 7th century A.D.

45 *Op. cit.*

46 Whether this ur-text was called *Tantrākhyāyika* or *Pañcatantra* it is not possible to determine.

47 Benfey (*op. cit.*) had surmised that the real author of the *Tantrākhyāyika* was Cāṇakya and that the name Viṣṇuśarmā was a clever invention, which would remind the reader of Cāṇakya's other name, Viṣṇu-gupta. Hertel (*op. cit.*) also agrees with this view. Chronologically, however, Cāṇakya Viṣṇu-gupta's authorship of the work is out of question. There is no difficulty in assuming that Viṣṇuśarmā was actually the author.

48 In his excellent introduction to his translation of the *Pañcatantra,* Benfey (*op. cit.*) has traced, in a masterly manner, the history of a large number of stories and popular motifs, and has pointed out that most of them have originated in India. The story of the migration of these fairy tales from India to the West is perhaps more absorbing than the tales themselves. Benfey has further clearly indicated how tremendously the *Pañcatantra* has influenced the literatures of three continents. See also Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur,* 295 ff.

contains. Consequently, Hertel assigns the original text of the work to the second century B.C. But we also frequently come across in the *Tantrākhyāyikā* certain later technical terms relating to the *nītiśāstra*. It is, therefore, more probable that the original text became ready only after A.D. 250. The use of Sanskrit for such popular secular literature,[49] the general *kāvya* style of the work, the use in it of the words, *dīnāra* and *rūpaka*,[50] the fact that the *Mahābhārata* had already assumed traditional authority in the eyes of its author, and its essentially Brahmanic character would further point to the *Tantrākhyāyikā* being the production of the early Gupta period.[51]

Mention may also be made in this connection of the three *Śatakas* of Bhartṛhari—the *Śṛṅgāraśataka*, the *Nītiśataka*, and the *Vairāgyaśataka*. Literary tradition in India is unanimous on the point that the *Śatakas* are the work of a single poet, and not anthologies. This tradition is further confirmed by the remarkable imprint which the three *Śatakas* bear of a unitary poetic personality. Unlike the *Amaruśataka*, the *Śṛṅgāraśataka* contains general observations on love and woman. To this *Śataka*, dealing with sensuous life, the poet seems to have consciously added two more *Śatakas*—one dealing with life of virtue and wisdom, and the other with life of renunciation. It has been held that Bhartṛhari, the author of the *Śatakatrayī*, was the same as Bhartṛhari, the author of the *Vākyapadīya*. The Chinese pilgrim, I-tsing, who visited India, recorded in A.D. 691 that Bhartṛhari who was a true Buddhist and was renowned throughout India had died forty years before. It has therefore been assumed that Bhartṛhari, the author of the *Vākyapadīya* and the *Śatakatrayī*, died about A.D. 651. His literary activity may, therefore, be placed just after the end of the Gupta period.[52]

49 It is not necessary to presuppose the existence of any prākrit fable-literature as the precursor of this type of literature. The history of Sanskrit narrative literature shows that it is an independent creation.

50 The use of the word *dīnāra* shows that the work belongs to a period posterior to the second century A.D. The word *rūpaka*, in the sense of a coin, was first used by Āryabhaṭa, that is, in the Gupta period.

51 Perhaps to the Gupta period also belongs the original of the *Vetālapañcaviṁśatikā*. There is a tradition that Chandra-gupta II, Vikramāditya, was an adept in some kind of witchcraft. This may have given rise to the association of Vetāla and Vikrama (Vikramasena or Trivikramasena).

52 It would be highly interesting to see if it is possible to correlate the general conditions in the age of the Guptas with the three moods—perhaps successive—expressed by Bhartṛhari in his *Śatakas*. In recent time, the personality and the *Śatakas* of Bhartṛhari are critically studied by D. D. Kosambi (see his edition of the *Śatakatraya* published by the Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavan, Bombay, 1947; also see his article 'The quality of Renunciation in Bhartṛhari's poetry', *BV*; some extant versions of Bhartṛhari's *Śatakas*, *JBBRAS*, XXI, 1945, pp. 17-32; On the authorship of the *Śatakatrayi*, *JORM*, December 1945, pp. 64-77). According to Kosambi, the gramma-

6. *Philosophical Literature*

Reference has been made above to the Sūtras of the six Brahmanical systems of Philosophy (Vol. II, p. 659). The period dealt with in this volume witnessed the development of the polemical portions of these Sūtras and a vast literature for exposition of the leading ideas contained in the nuclear Sūtras, and the defence of each of these against attacks by the other systems or heterodox sects like Buddhists and Jainas.

The Sāṁkhya system of philosophy, once widely prevalent, now lost ground, its theism being absorbed by the epics, and its categories of Prakriti, Purusha and *Gunas* being taken over by Vedānta. Its tenets were succinctly set forth by Īśvarakrishṇa in his *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*, said to contain the essence of an earlier work *Shashthitantra*, probably by Vārshagaṇya, which dealt with the subject under sixty heads and contained many parables and dialectics against other schools. Vindhyavāsin (c. A.D. 300) came after Vārshagaṇya, and was successful in controversy against Buddhamitra, the teacher of Vasubandhu.[53] Īśvarakrishna was Vindhyavāsin's pupil. His *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*, also called *Suvarna-saptati*, was refuted by Vasubandhu in his *Paramārtha-saptati*. The identification of Vindhyavāsin and Īśvarakrishna proposed by Keith[54] is improbable and the former is known to have had the personal name Rudrita.[55] Īśvarakrishna's work is referred to by the Jainas as *Kanaka-saptati*; it was taken by the Buddhist monk Paramārtha to China in A.D. 546, and there translated along with a gloss into Chinese between 557 and 568.[56]

Mādhava was an important Sāṁkhya writer who flourished before Kumārila and held some striking views. He is referred to by Umveka

rian Bhartṛihari, who was the author of the *Vākyapadīya*, cannot be identified with the author of the *Śatakatrayī*. Regarding the question of the *Śatakatrayī* being an anthology, Kosambi suggests, on the basis of a text-critical study of the work, that 'though the work could not originally have been a *Śatakatrayī*, there is some sort of a common source for all the extant MSS., so that at best one can say that the anthology is of stanzas ascribed to Bhartṛihari, though the compendium was probably made long after the author's death'. He further points out that 'a certain type of stanzas had been associated with the name of Bhartṛihari from the earliest times (not later than the 3rd century A.D.), and these attracted others by similitude which rounded out the work'. In that case, the nucleus of the *Śatakatrayī* may be said to belong to a period immediately preceding the Gupta Age. The *Śatakatrayī* as such, however, may have been a product of the Gupta period.

53 B. Bhattacharya, *Tattvasaṁgraha*, *GOS*, XXX, Intr., pp. xi-xiv; *JIH*, Vol. I.

54 *HASL*, 488.

55 Kamalaśīla's *Pañjikā* on Śāntarakshita's *Tattvasaṁgraha*; 22.

56 Fr. Tr. by Takakusu, *BEFEO*, IV, 978; Eng. Tr. by S. S. Sastri. Madras Univ.; Skt. restoration by Ayyaswami Sastri *Suvarṇa-saptati-śāstra*; n. *Venk. Or. Inst.*, Tirupati, 1944.

in his commentary on Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika*[57] as holding that sacrifices were *adharma* as they involved *hiṁsā*. A later writer Karṇakagomin condemned Mādhava as Sāṁkhya-nāśaka.[58] Mādhava seems to have been earlier than Diṅnāga.[59] The polyhistor Vāchaspati Miśra (A.D. 841) wrote his erudite *Sāṁkhya-tattva-Kaumudī* on Īśvarakrishṇa's *Kārikās*; he mentions another Sāṁkhya text of the period, the *Rājavārttika*.

As an allied system, Yoga shared the same fate as Sāṁkhya. Its practical discipline was adopted by all schools, orthodox as well as heterodox, but it had little influence on the metaphysical side. The *bhāshya* on the *sūtras* of Patañjali attributed to Vyāsa may belong to this period as it refutes the Vijñānavāda of Buddhists at some length. Vāchaspati contributed to this system also his scholarly gloss *Tattva-viśāradī* in which he traces many of the citations in the Bhāshya to Pañchaśikha.

The realistic and pluralistic philosophers of the Nyāya and Vaiśeshika schools, adherents of Śaiva sects by religion, bore the brunt of the fight with Buddhism in this age, and were designated by their adversaries as Pāśupatas, Śaivas and Yaugas. Brahminical and Buddhist scholars, and later the Jainas as well, jointly built up the edifice of Indian logic as concomitant of their endless debates. Buddhist logic from Vasubandhu onwards is now seen to be derived from Praśastapāda whose exposition of the Vaiśeshika in the *Padārtha-dharma-saṁgraha* was so important as to supersede the *bhāshya* of the school and take its place. As Vasubandhu refutes Praśastapāda in his *Buddha-gotra-śāstra*, we must hold that Diṅnāga borrowed from the Vaiśeshika writer in his *Pramāṇa-samuchchaya*. In Nyāya, the *bhāshya* of Vātsyāyana on Gautama's *sūtras* presupposes previous commentaries. Opinion is divided on the chronology of Praśastapāda and Vātsyāyana: Bodas puts them in the order just given while Keith and Randle reverse it on the ground that Vātsyāyana's logic is less evolved than that of Praśastapāda. As Vasubandhu (c. A.D. 350) criticizes the *Nyāya-sūtras* and Vātsyāyana does not reply to him, we have to place Vātsyāyana about A.D. 300. He criticizes the Buddhist tenets of momentariness and idealism and the views of Nāgārjuna in particular. Vātsyāyana was criticized by Vasubandhu's pupil Diṅnāga.

A Vaiśeshika work preserved in Chinese is the *Daśapadārtha-śāstra*

57 Madras edn., p. 112, vv. 249-52.

58 This and not Sāṁkhya-nāyaka as it appears in Uṁveka's printed text is the correct form of the attribute, see Karznakagomin on Pramāṇa-Vārttika of Dharmakīrti, *BORS*., edn., 595.

59 See next page.

of Chandra-mati or Mati-chandra based on Praśastapāda; this work was composed about the middle of the sixth century, was translated into Chinese by Hiuan Tsang in 648, and evoked no fewer than ten Japanese commentaries. It does not deal with God or means of deliverance, and adds four categories to the six of old Vaiśeshika—*śakti* and *aśakti*, *sāmānya-viśesha* and *abhava*.

7. *Technical and Scientific Literature*

(*a*) *Grammar and Lexicography*: The science of language has had a tremendous fascination for Indians ever since early times. Monumental works on grammar, of a very fundamental character, like those of Pāṇini and Patañjali, had already been produced. Further work in this field had, therefore, necessarily to be in the direction of abridgement, simplification, and elucidation. Among the grammatical works produced in the age of the Guptas, the earliest, perhaps, is the *Kātantra* of Sarva-varman. This elementary grammar which is certainly a more simplified text-book than Pāṇini's work, seems to have been written on the eve of the foundation of the Gupta Empire. Though Sarva-varman is not altogether independent of Pāṇini, he claims to have inaugurated, through his work, a new system of grammar. In the field of linguistics, as in several other fields, the name of Vararuchi is definitely one to conjure with. He is reputed to have been the author of the *Vārttika* on Pāṇini's *Sūtras*, of the *Prākṛitaprakāśa*, which is a work on Prakrit grammar, of the *Vararuchisaṁgraha*, which is a collection of twenty-five *kārikās* briefly dealing with the formation of words, compounds, verbs, etc., and of the *Liṅgaviśeshavidhi*, which is a work partly lexicographical and partly grammatical in character. According to a popular literary tradition, Vararuchi was one of the nine jewels which adorned the court of Vikramāditya. The historicity of this tradition is, however, highly questionable. It has to be confessed that, in the history of Sanskrit literature, Vararuchi's personality has unfortunately remained, till now, an unsolved mystery.

The Buddhists and Jainas tried to simplify the Pāṇinian system in different ways. One of the earliest efforts in this direction was the *Chandravyākaraṇa*, by Chandragomin, which had been very popular in the Buddhist provinces, like Kashmir, Nepāl and Tibet, and which had even reached Ceylon. According to the evidence from the Chinese sources, produced by Peri, Chandragomin must be supposed to have lived at the beginning or in the first half of the seventh century A.D. The facts that his grammar was used by the *Kāśikā* and that he was complimented by Bhartṛihari (circa, A.D. 600-50) as having been the true reviver of the study of the *Mahābhāshya*, would, however, indicate that Chandragomin must have lived in the last decades of the

sixth century A.D. Though essentially dependent on Pāṇini and Patañjali, Chandragomin has made some original contributions to Sanskrit grammar, and has introduced, in his grammar, his own terminology, which is distinct from that of Pāṇini. Liebich has proved that Chandragomin himself wrote the *Chandravṛitti*, which is a commentary on his own *Vyākaraṇasūtras*.

The name of Bhartṛihari has already been mentioned in another context. According to I-tsing he lived in the first half of the seventh century A.D. but his true date may go back to the fifth century. He is reputed to have written a commentary on the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali, only a few fragments of which are now available. His other work, the *Vākyapadīya*, which is available in its entirety, is divided into three books, and is therefore also known as the *Trikāṇḍi*. The first book deals with the philosophy of language in general, the second with 'sentence' and the third with 'word'. To about the same time belongs also the *Kāśikā-vṛitti* of Jayāditya and Vāmana.[60] According to I-tsing, Jayāditya died not later than A.D. 661-62. The Chinese pilgrim reports that students, in those days, commenced their study of this excellent commentary on Pāṇini's *sūtras* at the age of fifteen, and had to continue it for a period of five years in order to be able to secure a thorough grasp of the subject. He further reports that the Chinese pilgrims who desired to make a trip to India made their first acquaintance with Sanskrit through the *Kāśikā*. The *Liṅgānuśāsana* of Harshadeva, which is a grammatical-cum-lexicographical work, is also generally ascribed to the middle of the seventh century A.D.

The most famous lexicographical work in Sanskrit is the *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana* of Amarasiṁha—better known as the *Amarakośa*. What Pāṇini's *sūtras* are to grammatical literature, the *Amarakośa* is to lexicographical literature. Amarasiṁha was a Mahāyāna Buddhist, but his *kośa* is in no special way influenced by his religious proclivity. According to the well-known—but historically unreliable—literary tradition, Amarasiṁha was one of the nine jewels of Vikramāditya's court. Bhandarkar has suggested that, since Amarasiṁha was a Mahāyāna Buddhist, he cannot be placed later than the sixth century A.D.[61] Whatever might have been the exact date of this famous lexicographer, there is no doubt that the *Amarakośa* is the oldest among the extant Sanskrit lexicons. It is a lexicon of synonyms, and is divided into three books—each book containing synonyms relating to certain specific categories. A similar method of division and arrangement is followed also in later dictionaries of synonyms.

60 Most probably Jayāditya is the author of the first five books of the *Kāśikā*, while Vāmana, who cannot be identified with the rhetorician Vāmana, wrote the last three.

61 R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism . . .* etc., 45.

(b) *Mathematics*: In ancient India, mathematics and astronomy originated and developed primarily as auxiliaries of the Vedic ritual. From the times of the *Vedāṅga-Jyotisha* and the *Kalpasūtras* up to the enlightened age of the Guptas, there has been practically a gap in mathematical and astronomical literature. The Bakshalī manuscript[62] and the Puranic portions dealing with these branches of learning would, however, seem to indicate that the tradition of the knowledge and practice of these sciences had not been seriously interrupted during the intervening period. Varāhamihira, who wrote in the middle of the sixth century A.D., has utilized, in his *Pañchasiddhāntikā*, five earlier important astronomical texts, and has mentioned the names of a number of his predecessors, presumably ranging between the second century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. This fact also confirms the assumption regarding the continuity of this study. In ancient India, mathematics has always been treated as a handmaid to astronomy. But Āryabhaṭa was the first writer to deal with it more or less as an independent science. As a matter of fact, that scholar must be said to have been the real pioneer of the revival of mathematical science in India. According to his own testimony, Āryabhaṭa wrote his work, the *Āryabhaṭīya* in Kusumapura (that is, Pāṭaliputra) in the year 3600 of the Kaliyuga, when he himself was 23 years old. This means that he was born in A.D. 476 and wrote in A.D. 499.[63] The *Āryabhaṭīya* is divided into four parts, out of which the last three are sometimes erroneously regarded as forming an independent work under the name *Āryāshṭaśata*. The first part, called the *Daśagītikāsūtra*, which, as a matter of fact, consists of 13 stanzas in the *āryā* metre, describes the numerical notation, which is special to Āryabhaṭa. He had invented an alphabetic system of notation, which he has used for enumerating the numerical data of his descriptive astronomy.[64] When later on, the idea of place-value was developed, the denominations (number-names) were used to denote the places which unity would occupy in order to represent them in writing a number on the decimal scale. According

62 This manuscript was discovered in 1880 near Bakshalī in the Mardan tehsil. Peshawar district. It is written in the Śāradā script on leaves of birch bark and consists of 70 leaves. L. V. Gurjar (*Ancient Indian Mathematics and Vedha*, Bombay, 1947) suggests that the present manuscript is clearly a copy of some old manuscript, the text in which must have been composed between the 2nd century B.C. and 2nd century A.D. The copy now available seems to have been made in about 8th century A.D.

63 There are two Āryabhaṭas well-known in the field of mathematics and astronomy. We are here concerned with Āryabhaṭa who wrote the *Āryabhaṭīya*. and who may be conveniently called Āryabhaṭa I. Āryabhaṭa II. who lived at a later date, wrote the *Ārya-Siddhānta*.

64 The rule is given in the *Dāśagītikāsūtra* as follows: *vargākṣarāṇi vargé vargé vargākṣarāni kāt ṅmau yaḥ khadvinavake svarā nava vargé vargé navantyavargá va*.

to Āryabhaṭa the denominations are the names of "places". He says *Eka, daśa, śata, sahasra, ayuta, niyuta, prayuta, koṭi, arbuda,* and *vṛinda* are respectively from place to place, each ten times the preceding.'[65] This must indeed be regarded as an outstanding landmark in the development of Indian mathematics. The second part of the *Āryabhaṭīya*, called the *Gaṇita-pāda*, consists of 33 stanzas, and is the only part which really represents Āryabhaṭa's contribution to mathematical science. The third part *Kālakriyā* (25 stanzas) contains calculations relating to time, and the last, called the *Golapāda,* deals, in 50 stanzas, with spherics. The *Gaṇita-pāda* in the *Āryabhaṭiya* is a monument of compactness as well as elegance of composition. Āryabhaṭa has given all his results in the form of finished formulas. As regards geometry, Āryabhaṭa considers, among other topics, the area of a triangle, the theorem on similarity of triangles, the area of a circle, and the theorem relating to rectangles contained by the segments of chords of a circle. The value of π given by him is correct to four places of decimals (3.1416). In algebra and arithmetic, he has given the rule of three, which is a definite improvement over the Bakshalī rule, and a rule for solving examples concerning interest. He has also enunciated the method of inversion and has stated a formula giving the sum of an arithmetical progression and its middle term, a formula for the solution of simple indeterminate equations, a formula giving the value of the number of terms when the sum of the series, the first term and the common difference are given, and a formula for the sum of the squares and the cubes of natural numbers.[66]

(c) *Astronomy*: As in mathematics, so too in astronomy, Āryabhaṭa was an outstanding figure of the Gupta Age. Through his work, he has presented in a compact form, the astronomical system which had already been developed in the *Siddhāntas*. Though he has evidently made an attempt to improve certain features of the *Siddhāntas,* he cannot, on the whole, be credited with having made any significant advance over the *Sūrya-Siddhānta.* His most original contribution, however, is his definite assertion that the earth rotates round its axis. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that two of his immediate successors, Varāhamihira and Brahma-gupta, have stoutly opposed this assertion. As for Āryabhaṭa's other achievements in the field of astronomy, it may be mentioned that he was the first to utilize sine functions in astronomy; that he discovered an accurate formula to measure the increase or decrease in the duration of two consecutive days; that he enunciated his own epicyclic theory to explain the variations in planetary motions; that he stated accurately the angular diameter of

65 *Āryabhaṭīya,* II, 2. Cf. Datta and Singh, *History of Hindu Mathematics;* part I, Lahore, 1935, pp. 12-13.

66 Cf. Gurjar, *op. cit.,* 79-90; cf., 91-99.

the earth's shadow at the moon's orbit, and gave a method of finding the duration of an eclipse; and that he made a more correct calculation, than before, of the length of a year.

One of the most significant features of the astronomical works produced in the so-called scientific period is the obvious acquaintance of their writers with Greek astronomy. This fact becomes all the more clear from the work of Varāhamihira, who was another outstanding astronomer in the age of the Guptas. The time calculations in Varāhamihira's *Pañchasiddhāntikā* begin from A.D. 505. There has been a frequently mentioned tradition that Varāhamihira died in A.D. 587. It is, therefore, assumed by Kern that A.D. 505 was the date of Varāhamihira's birth.[67] The tradition about the date of Varāhamihira's death is, however, not reliable. Moreover, the *Pañchasiddhāntikā* is a work of the nature of a *Karaṇa*,[68] and, usually, the time-calculations in a *Karaṇa-grantha* are made from the date in which it is written. It is, therefore, more likely that A.D. 505 was the year in which Varāhamihira wrote his *Pañchasiddhāntikā*. It is needless to add that the other literary tradition, namely, that Varāhamihira was one of the nine jewels in the court of Vikramāditya is nothing better than a fiction. In the *Pañchasiddhāntikā*, Varāhamihira reproduces, in the *Karaṇa*-form, the astronomical teachings of the five *Siddhāntas*, which were considered in his time the most authoritative works on astronomy. These five *Siddhāntas* are, in their probable chronological order, the *Paitāmaha-Siddhānta*, the *Vāśishṭha-Siddhānta*, the *Pauliśa-Siddhānta*, the *Romaka-Siddhānta* and the *Sūrya-Siddhānta*. Out of these, the *Paitāmaha* evidently belongs to the pre-scientific period, while the remaining four belong to the early Gupta period. The *Vāśishṭha* (circa A.D. 300) shows a definite advance in its knowledge about the movements of the heavenly bodies. It also introduces *rāśis* in the place of *nakshatras*, and the conception of *lagna*. The name of the *Pauliśa-Siddhānta* (circa A.D. 380) which enunciates a rule for calculating lunar and solar eclipses, and which also gives a table of sines and two trigonometrical rules, would remind one of Paulus Alexandrinus. But, since the latter is known to be the author only of an astrological hand-book, Thibaut is of the opinion that there cannot have been any connection between him and the *Pauliśa-Siddhānta*.[69] Both in name and contents, the *Romaka-Siddhānta* (circa A.D. 400) clearly betrays Western influence. This may have been possible on account of the active contact between the Roman empire and the Gupta empire.

67 Kern, *Bṛihatsaṁhitā*, Preface, 2 ff.

68 There are four kinds of scientific astronomical works: (1) *Siddhāntas*, (2) *Karaṇas*, (3) astronomical tables, and (4) commentaries.

69 G. Thibaut, *Astronomie, Astrologie und Mathematik* (Grundriss, III, 9), Strassburg, 1899.

The *Sūrya-Siddhānta* (circa A.D. 400) represents the standard type of *Siddhānta* work. It is also the most important and complete astronomical work of the period, and consists of fourteen chapters in verse. Alberuni mentions Lāṭa as its author. According to its opening stanzas, however, Sūrya revealed this *Siddhānta* to Asura Maya in the city of Romaka. Herein we may see the evidence of Greek astronomy having served as the basis of the *Sūrya-Siddhānta*. At the same time, the peculiarly Indian character of its teachings is indicated by its acceptance of the idea of *kalpa* and *mahāyuga,* and of the mount Meru lying at the North pole. It is difficult to determine accurately, on the basis of the available evidence, the authorship, the dates, and the nature of the original texts of these *Siddhāntas.* Great credit is, therefore, certainly due to Varāhamihira for having preserved their essential teachings in his *Pañchasiddhāntikā.*

(d) *Astrology*: In India, astronomy and astrology normally go hand in hand. Ever since very ancient times, astrologers have played not an insignificant part in the various departments of individual and communal life of the Indian people. It would not, therefore, be too much to presume that works on astrology must have been produced in India since very early times. Unfortunately, most of the older literature on the subject is now lost to us. However, whatever information we possess regarding the early astrological texts, their authors, and their contents, we owe it all, again, to Varāhamihira. As in astronomy, so too in astrology, Varāhamihira has, in his encyclopaedic work, preserved quite a considerable amount of the ancient knowledge on the subject. His *Bṛihatsaṁhitā,* besides being the most important text-book on natural astrology, is a veritable compendium of ancient Indian learning and sciences. Varāhamihira refers to many predecessors and their writings; but only one astrological work belonging to the earlier times, namely, the *Vṛiddha-Garga-Saṁhitā,* is available to us.[70] *Jyotiḥśāstra,* according to Varāhamihira, comprises three branches; the *Tantra* or astronomico-mathematical branch; the *Horā,* which concerns itself with horoscope, and the third, which deals with natural astrology.[71] The last is perhaps the most important, for Varāhamihira glorifies an astrologer in the following flattering term: 'Like night without lamp and sky without the Sun, is a king without an astrologer. Just like a blind man he

70 Though the *Vṛiddha-Garga-Saṁhitā* does not belong to the Gupta period, one stanza from it may be here referred to with advantage, since it throws considerable light on the question of Greek influence on Indian astronomy and astrology. The purport of the stanza is: The Greeks are indeed barbarians; but their knowledge about heavenly bodies is very well-grounded. They therefore deserve to be respected like our own ancient seers.

71 *Bṛihatsaṁhitā,* I, 5.

flounders on his way.'[72] Among Varāhamihira's other astrological works may be mentioned the *Brihadvivāhapaṭala* and the *Svalpavivāhapaṭala*, which principally deal with the favourable *muhūrtas* for marriage; the *Yogayātrā*, which describes the auspicious portents for the expeditions of kings; and the *Brihajjātaka* and the *Laghujātaka*, which concern themselves with the time of man's birth and its influence on his future.[73] Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the writings of Varāhamihira, which include more or less basic texts on astronomy, astrology, and several other technical sciences, are no less remarkable as poetic compositions. Varāhamihira's son, Prithuyaśas, also was an ardent student of astrology, and wrote, in about A.D. 600, a work called *Horāshaṭpañchāśikā*.

(e) *Medicine*: The earliest more or less definitely datable Indian work on medicine belongs to the early Gupta period. In 1890, Lt. H. Bower discovered, in a Buddhist *stūpa* in Kashgar, a group of ancient texts (now popularly known as the Bower manuscript), three out of seven from among which deal with medicine.[74] It has been shown, on palaeographical grounds, that the Bower manuscript belongs to the second half of the fourth century A.D. Though, on account of the fact that the available tracts are obviously not complete, it is not possible to determine the name of their author (or authors), it seems almost certain, from the place of their find, that he was a Buddhist.[75] One of the three medical tracts concerns itself with the study of garlic, the use of which is said to cure various illnesses, and to assure a life of 100 years. It also deals with topics like digestion and eye-diseases and their cure, and gives a prescription for an elixir to secure a 1,000 years of life. Another tract contains formulas for the preparation of fourteen kinds of specifics for external and internal application. The most important tract, however, is the second, which is called the *Nāvanītaka* or the cream of the earlier texts on the subject. In sixteen sections, the *Nāvanītaka* deals, among other things, with different kinds of powders, decoctions, oils, and elixirs, while

72 *Ibid.*, II, p. 9.

73 This 'science' is probably of Babylonian origin, and is adopted from the Greeks by other people. Jacobi believes that the Indians borrowed it about the middle of the 4th century A.D. Against this, however, there is the evidence of presumably earlier Indian works on the subject.

74 A. F. Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscript Facsimile leaves*, Calcutta, 1893-1912 (*ASI*—Vol. XXII). Texts 1 to 33 are medical; 4 and 5, called the *Pāśakakevalī*, deal with abomancy; 6 and 7, called the *Mahā-māyūrī-vidyā-rājñī*, contain charms against snake-bite.

75 Apart from the *Atharvaveda* hymns and allied literature, the ancient Buddhist literature also contains several indications regarding the antiquity of medical science and practice in India.

a considerable portion of the tract is devoted to children's diseases. These medical tracts, which are metrical and often employ the metres familiar to Sanskrit *kāvya*, are written in popular Sanskrit, not seldom overladen with Prakritisms. The *Nāvanītaka* mentions several earlier authorities like Agniveśa, Bheda, Hārīta, Jatukarna, Ksharapāṇi and Parāśara—all of them being pupils of Punarvasu Ātreya. The only familiar name of a medical authority referred to in it is that of Suśruta.

(f) *Chemistry, Metallurgy, Physics*: Another science, which must have developed along with medicine is chemistry. Without adequate knowledge of chemistry, any advance in medical science would have been almost impossible. Unfortunately, no work on chemistry, belonging to the Gupta period, has come down to us. Nāgārjuna, the great Mahāyāna Buddhist philosopher, is reputed to have distinguished himself also in chemistry. As a matter of fact, he is believed to have been the real father of 'scientific' chemistry. It is, therefore, possible to assume that Nāgārjuna had founded an independent school of chemistry, perhaps with its centre at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, and that his pupils continued to develop that science through that agency. Though we have no literary evidence to support this assumption, we do have the evidence of the actual application of that science. Besides medicine, chemistry must have substantially helped the development of metallurgy. Suffice it to point out, in this connection, that the Meharauli Iron Pillar will, for ever, remain a living monument to the progress in metallurgy achieved in the age of the Guptas. According to Dr. Murray Thomson, the Meharauli Iron Pillar, which is 23 feet and 8 inches in height and 16.4 inches in diameter at the base, and 12.5 inches in diameter at the top, is made of pure malleable iron of 7.66 specific gravity. Apart from its importance to the historian of ancient India, on account of the absence of rust on it, in spite of exposure to the open air for over 1,500 years, this iron pillar has become an object of research by such eminent metallurgists as Sir Robert Hadfield.[76] It has been rightly said that, till very recent years, the production of such a pillar would have been an impossibility even in the largest foundries of the world. A reference must be made, in this connection, also to the colossal copper statue of the Buddha, found at Sultangunj, near Bhagalpur, which is about 7½ feet in height and nearly one ton in weight.

The art of the Gupta Age will be discussed in Chapter XXXI. The arts of sculpture and painting reached the highest degree of development during this age.

76 Cf. *Science and Culture*, January 1947.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE PALLAVAS

1. THE TAMIL LAND

THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY A.D. marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the South. The Śaṅgam age draws to an end, and the Andhra-Sātavāhana empire goes out of existence. The Cholas cease to exist as a political power in the Tamil country which comes to be divided between the Pallavas to the north of the Kāvērī river and the Pāṇḍyas to its south. Till the beginning of the ninth century the only vestiges of the Cholas are found in the Telugu-Choḍa kingdom in the valley of the N. Peṇṇār, and in stray literary and epigraphical references to the Chola country. From the close of the Śaṅgam age the history of the Tamil country becomes very obscure until about the middle of the sixth century A.D. or a little later; no continuous history of the intervening period can be attempted in the present state of our knowledge. The story of the subsequent period is well attested by epigraphy and literature.

The Śātavāhana empire reached the height of its prosperity under Gautamīputra and his immediate successors. It attained its farthest expansion in the south under Yajña-Śrī towards the end of the second century A.D. How far south of the Krishṇā-Tuṅgabhadrā line the power of the Śātavāhanas extended cannot be definitely determined. Coins of Yajña-Śrī have been found as far south as the Southern Peṇṇār, but this does not necessarily imply that his empire extended so far. No Śātavāhana inscriptions are known to have been found south of the Bellary district. On the other hand there is some evidence from Śaṅgam literature that some areas south of the Tuṅgabhadrā were ruled by chieftains who were not Tamils and who were not always at peace with them. On the west coast the region round Mt. D'Ely, a little to the north of Cannanore, marks the northernmost limit of the Tamil country; its ruler was Nannan of Chera extraction whose land is called golden Koṅkāṇam.[1] Beyond it lay the Ārya country, the Ariake of the Greek writers, and the Daṇḍāraṇyaṁ. Erumai of the modern Mysore country is definitely described as a Vaḍuga chieftain, and his land

1 *Naṛṛ*, 391.

as the western country, Kuḍa-nāḍu.[2] We shall see that the Śaṅgam tradition seems to distinguish Vaḍugas from the Telugus and Karnāṭakas, though we may not be quite sure of this as we have only relatively late authorities to guide us. Pulli of Véṅgaḍam (Tirupati) is another chieftain who is called the chieftain of Kalvar and whose speech is said to have abounded in longish sounds, a statement which recalls another description of Vaḍugar as the people of untutored drawling speech accompanied by fierce dogs.[3] On the other hand Pulli's neighbour to the east was a Tamil chieftain of Tiraiya origin who had his capital at Pavittiri,[4] which has been identified with Reḍḍipālem in the Nellore district, a little to the north of the Pulicat lake. The Vaḍugas are said to have once formed the vanguard of the Mauryan army, and it is quite probable that under the Śātavāhanas they occupied the southern marches of the Deccani empire. We have several echoes in literature of conflicts between Tamil chieftains and Vaḍugas, but the total absence of a reliable chronology renders these casual literary references practically valueless for purposes of history.

When the Śaṅgam age closes and the Śātavāhana empire disappears in the third century, we find the Chuṭu-nāgas, who had the Śātakarṇi title and were apparently an offshoot of the Śātavāhana line, in occupation of the south-west region of the original empire of the Śātavāhanas, and the Pallavas in the south-east with Kāñchīpuram for their capital. Though at first the Pallavas seem to have ruled over the whole of the eastern coastal territory up to the Krishṇā river, they became known particularly as the rulers of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, the territory round Kāñchīpuram, which in later times consisted of twenty-four divisions, each with a fortress of its own.

It may be useful to note at this point an ancient scheme of linguistic division of the Tamil country and its neighbourhood as it was understood by the Tamil grammarians. The nature of the division is hinted at briefly in the text of the *Tolkāppiyam,* the most ancient and complete treatise extant, but the details we owe to Nachchinārkkiniyar, a commentator of the late middle ages who doubtless reproduced the prevalent tradition of his time. The area of standard Tamil (*Śen Tamil*) lay between the rivers Vaigai in the south and Marudi, a streamlet in the Trichinopoly district (a little beyond Coleroon) in the north, the sea in the east and Karūr in the west. Round this central block lay twelve other divisions, also reckoned as Tamil country, but not of such cultivated speech as the Śen-Tamiḻ-nāḍu. They were: (1) Poṅgar (2) Oḷi (3) Ten-Pāṇḍi

2 *Aham,* 115, and 253.
3 *Ibid.,* 61, 107 (Vaḍugar) and 398.
4 *Ibid.,* 340.

(4) Kuṭṭam (5) Kuḍam (6) Panḷi (7) Karkā (8) Śītam (9) Pūḷi (10) Malaiyamān (11) Aruvā and (12) Aruvā-Vaḍatalai. Similar regions beyond these are also noted by him though not by his predecessors, Iḷampūraṇar and Śénāvaraiyar; these regions are also twelve in number, and obviously include some areas where Tamil was not spoken. They are: (1) Śiṅgaḷam (Ceylon) (2) Paḷam Tīvu (lit. old island, a name of the Maldives) (3) Kollam (4) Kūpam (5) Koṅkāṇam (6) Tulu (7) Kuḍagu (8) Karunaḍam (9) Kuḍam (10) Vaḍugu (11) Teluṅgu and (12) Kalingam. It will be noticed that Kuḍam (west) occurs twice over in the lists besides Kuḍagu (Coorg). This may appear to detract from the authenticity of the lists. We may have here one more instance of the common feature of unfamiliar geographical names being transformed out of recognition in repeated transcriptions by scribes. Nevertheless, it is of interest to note that Vaḍugu is counted as distinct from Karunaḍam and Teluṅgu. Two Vaḍuga chieftains, Erumai and Pulli, have been mentioned above as occupants of the northern frontier of the Tamil country. The Baḍagas of the Nilgiris may be taken to represent the last remnants of the Vaḍugas of old. The river Ayiri, said to water the good country of Erumai,[5] may be identified with the Hagari in Kaḍūr and Chitaldurg districts of Mysore. Bāṇa inscriptions of a later time speak of the Bāṇa homeland as a 12,000 district, forming the western part Vaḍuga-vaḷi, the Vaḍuga-road, which is usually rendered into Sanskrit by the phrase Andhra-patha—an indication that the Vaḍugas were closely related to the Andhras, if not identical with them.

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE PALLAVAS

Who were the Pallavas? Many indications point to their being strangers to the Tamil country, unrelated to any of the three ancient lines of the Chera, Pāṇḍya, and Chola. Many have treated the name Pallava as a variant of Pahlava, and held that like the Satraps of Ujjain they were a foreign line of rulers of 'Scythian' origin. With less justification others have sought to connect them with Jaffna, identified with the island of Maṇipallavam mentioned in the *Manimekalai.* That poem mentions that Pīlivaḷai, a *nāga* princess, who had a son by a Chola prince, sent the child to its father on a merchant-man, which left Maṇipallavam but was wrecked before it reached its destination, and that the child was lost in the sea. But there is nathing to connect the child with the Pallavas, and Maṇipallavam cannot possibly be Jaffna so near the mainland of India. Nachchinārkkiniyar, however, records a later legend. A Chola prince from

5 *Ibid.,* 253.

Nāgapaṭṭinam had a liaison with a *nāga* maiden (not named) in the nether world; before his departure he told her that if she floated the child of their union on the waves of the sea with a twig of the *toṇḍai* creeper as a mark of identity, and if the child reached the shore safe, he would give him a share of his kingdom. This was the origin of the family of Toṇḍaiyar who ruled over Toṇḍaināḍ. Pallava is a Sanskrit word meaning tender shoots and leaves of a plant. And the official history of the Pallavas, as recorded in a relatively late Sanskrit inscription from Amarāvatī, traces the line to an eponymous ancestor Pallava, child of a union between the *apsaras* Madanī and the Brāhmaṇa warrior Aśvatthāman, fifth in descent from sage Bhāradvāja, the son of Brahmā.[6] The inscription says that Aśvatthāman gave the name Pallava to the prince, because his mother laid him on a litter of sprouts. It is an impossible task to get behind so many layers of legend and discover the true origin of the Pallavas. All their early charters are in Prākṛit, and obviously they were not Tamils in origin, though they were ready enough to adopt local traditions to make themselves the more acceptable to the people that came under their sway. There is much in favour of the thesis that the Pallavas rose into prominence in the service of the Śātavāhanas in the south-eastern division of their empire, and attained independence when that power declined. This view, which till recently was no more than an intelligent guess, seems to gain support from a Prākṛit Brāhmī inscription recently discovered in the Palnad *tāluk* of the Guṇṭur district. In spite of its mutilated condition, it clearly mentions Sīhavammạ of the Palava dynasty and Bharadaya *gotta;* it also mentions a *devakula* to which a gift seems to have been made. This is the earliest Pallava inscription so far known. The name Palava is intermediate in form between the original Pahlava and Pallava of the Hirahadagalli plates of Śivaskandavarmā. And as Sīhavamma bears no titles of independence like *Dhammamahārājādhirāja,* it seems possible that he was still a subordinate ruler of the Ikshvākus, though it must be noted that he speaks of his own kingdom (*appano vejayike*).[7] Stress has been laid recently on one factor pointing to a foreign extraction for the Pallavas. In the Vaikuṇṭha-perumāl temple at Kāñchīpuram we have a series of sculptured panels illustrating the events of Pallava history; in one of the panels depicting the selection of Nandi-varman II, a prince from a collateral line, to the throne then vacant owing

6 *SII*, I, No. 32. The name of the *apsaras* is Menakā in the Kaśākuḍi plates, *SII*. II, pp. 346 ff.; V. 17; and in the Rāyakoṭa plate of Skandaśishya (*EI*, V. No. 8) the mother of Pallava is a *nāgī*.

7 *JAHC*, II, pp. 68-69 and 'Ten years of Indian Epigraphy', by B. Ch. Chhabra in *Ancient India,* No. 5.

to the failure of the main line, one of the state officials explains to the father of the young prince that what he had brought with him was not an elephant's head, but the crown for his son. This clearly recalls the crown shaped like an elephant's scalp with which Alexander, Demetrius, and other foreign rulers are depicted on their coins.[8] On the other hand Rājaśekhara, the poly-histor of the early tenth century, gives no hint of any connection between Pallavas and Pahlavas whom he treats as separate peoples in his *Kāvya-Mīmāṁsā.*

III. THE EARLY PALLAVAS

The next Pallava ruler we hear of is Śivaskanda-varman. Palaeography suggests an interval of about half a century between him and Sīhavamma, and there is no other evidence for a closer determination of the chronology. Śivaskanda issues two charters, both in Prākṛit, one as *Yuvarāja*[9] and the other[10] in the eighth year of his rule as king. Both grants are issued from Kāñchīpuram. The earlier grant is an order addressed to the governor (*vāpatam*) of Dhaññakaḍa (Dhanakaṭaka, Amarāvatī) and disposing of a village in the Andhra country. His territory thus extended at least up to the Kṛishṇā in the north. In the later grant the king claims to have performed Agnishṭoma, Vājapeya, and Aśvamedha sacrifices, and bears the title *Dhammamahārājādhirāja.* He also mentions Bappasāmi who gave away large quantities of gold and numberless cows, besides thousands of *halas* of land. Bappasāmi means 'Lord father' and is no proper name; but he is given the title of *Mahārāja* and his commands were honoured without question (*appatihatasāsana*). There is a third Prākṛit charter[11] with more or less the same palaeography as the two already mentioned. It belongs to the reign of Siri Vijaya-khandavamma *Mahārāja* but the regnal year is lost. Probably the king was identical with Śivaskanda, though some are inclined to treat them as two different persons. This charter mentions further the Yuvamahārāja Vijaya Buddhavamma, and his queen Chārudevī, the mother of Buddhyaṅkura. It records the gift of four *nivartanas* of cultivated land by Chārudevī to God Nārāyaṇa of the Kuli-Mahataraka-devakula in Dālūra. These three charters, read together with the stone inscription from Palnad, give the impression of a rising and prosperous kingdom with an organized system of administration which derived many of its features from the Śātavāhanas and Mauryas. The western

8 *SII,* XII, p. ii.
9 Mayidayolu, *EI,* VII, 84-89.
10 Hirahadagalli, *EI,* I, p. 5; II, 483-85.
11 Br. Museum plates of Chārudevī, *EI,* VIII, pp. 143-46.

boundary of this early Pallava kingdom of Kāñchī is nowhere stated. But the Kadambas claim that Mayūraśarman, the founder of the line, got from the Pallavas, in the latter half of the fourth century A.D., the territory between Preharā and the western sea which became the nucleus of their kingdom. The Gaṅgas of Mysore acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pallavas. A Pallava charter of the ninth century states that an early monarch of the line, Vīrakūrcha, the son of Chūtapallava, obtained all the insignia of royalty together with the hand of a *nāga* princess[12]—which might be an echo of a dynastic alliance with the Chuṭukula-Śātakarṇis who ruled in the south-west part of the Śātavāhana empire. All these facts may warrant the inference that in these early days the Pallavas ruled from sea to sea.

There ensues total darkness for some time after the period of the Prākṛit charters. The only gleam of light is the occurrence of the name of Vishṇugopa of Kāñchī among the rulers of the South who were defeated by Samudra-gupta about the middle of the fourth century A.D. (p. 24). The name Vishṇugopa occurs in the genealogy of the Pallavas, as we shall see; but at a time much later than the age of Samudra-gupta. Ugrasena of Pālakka, another opponent of Samudra, had his principality somewhere in the Nellore district, and was most probably a subordinate of Vishṇugopa whose side he naturally took against the Gupta invader. He may be looked upon as belonging to the same family as Satyasena from whom Skandaśishya, an early Pallava king, is said to have seized the *ghaṭikā* of the Brahmins.[13]

The next stage in the history of the Pallavas is marked by nearly a dozen copper-plate charters, including a fragment,[14] all of them written in the Sanskrit language and recording only the names of kings besides land-grants of little historical value. They bear only the regnal years of the ruling king, and the tentative chronology of the period rests on general palaeographical considerations and a couple of synchronisms with two rulers of the Gaṅga dynasty who are said to have been crowned by their Pallava overlords. The

12 Velūrpalaiyam plates, *SII*, II, No. 98—V, 7.

13 *Ibid.*, V, 8.

14 They are: (1 and 2) Oṁgōḍu A and B, *EI*, XV, 246-55; (3) Uruvapalli, *IA*, V, 50-53; (4) Neduṅgarāya, *Bhāratī* (Vṛisha, Jyeshṭha, 699-713; (5) Maṅgadūr, *IA*, V, 154-7; (6) Pikira *EI*, VIII, 159-63; (7) Buchireḍḍipālem, *Jl. Mad. Uni*, XII, 129-59; (8) Chendalūr, *EI*, VIII, 233-36; (9) Udayendiram, *EI*, III, 142-47; (10) Chura, *EI*, XXIV, 137-43; (11) Darśi fragment, *EI*, I, 397. Nos. 8-10 are at best copies of lost originals, as their palaeography does not pertain to the period to which they purport to belong. Neither the confused list of the Vāyalūr pillar inscription giving fifty-four names with many repetitions (*EI*, XVIII, 151), nor the vague statements of later Pallava charters, are of much real use to the historian.

genuineness of some of these Pallava Sanskrit charters is not, however, beyond question. The manuscript of a Jaina work, *Lokavibhāga*, contains the information that Sarvanandin finished (copying or composing) the work on a day corresponding to 25 August A.D. 458, which fell in the twenty-second regnal year of Siṁhavarman, the ruler of Kāñchī.[15] The genealogy and chronology of the Pallavas of this period may be reconstructed as in the following table, where some names found in the Vélūrpāḷaiyam grant are added in brackets before the names of the first four kings found in the contemporary charters to indicate the identifications made by some writers, and the regnal periods are calculated on the data detailed above.

(Kālabhartṛ)-Kumāravishṇu I (Oṁ. A), A.D. 325-50
|
(Chūta-Pallava) Skanda-varman I, 350-75
|
(Vīrakūrcha) Vīra-varman, 375-400
|
(Skandaśishya) Skanda-varman II (Oṁ. A), 400-36

Siṁha-varman I, 436-60 (crowned Gaṅga Ayya-varman)	*Yuvamahārāja* Vishṇu-Gopavarman I (Urvapalli, Neduṅgarāya)	Kumāravishṇu II
Skanda-varman III, 460-80	Simha-varman II, 480-500 (Oṁ. B, Maṅgadūr, Pikira, Buchir.)	Buddha-varman
Nandi-varman (Udayendiram)	Vishṇu-gopavarman II 500-525 (Chura)	Kumāravishṇu III (Chendalur)

None of the Sanskrit charters except the Chendalūr and Udayendiram plates, both suspect, are issued from Kāñchīpuram, but from camps at different places like Tāmrapa, Palakkada, Menmātura, Daśanapura, Pikira, and Oṁgoḍu. For this reason some writers hold that the Pallavas lost their hold on Kāñchī during this period, and that the city passed into the hands of the Chola Karikāla and his successors for a time. They believe that Kāñchī was redeemed from the Cholas by Kumāravishṇu II as stated in the Vėlūrpāḷaiyam plates[16]

15 *JRAS*, 1915, pp. 471-85.
16 V, 9. See also *ASIAR*, 1906-7, p. 224; *EI*, XV, 249.

of Nandi-varman III. But there is no place for Karikāla, the early Chola monarch of the Śaṅgam age, after the period of the Pallava Prākṛit charters; he belonged most certainly to an earlier time, and there is no tangible evidence of his ever having conquered Kāñchīpuram. The fact that the charters are issued from 'victorious camps' (*vijaya-sthāna*, or *vijaya-skandhāvāra*, or *āvāsaka*) in different places cannot mean that the kings issuing the charters had lost their capital, but only that they were touring in their kingdom and exercised active supervision over its administration. We know how much depended on the personal alertness of the king, and what emphasis our manuals of polity lay on the constant vigilance and activity (*utthāna*) of the monarch. The statement in the Vélūrpāḷaiyam plates regarding Kumāravishṇu — then came Kumāravishṇu, victor in battles, who held Kāñchīnagara in his hands (*gṛihītakāñchīnagara*) — is vague, and may well be taken to mean that Kāñchī was the base from which he planned his campaigns, rather than that he took Kāñchī from an enemy, least of all the Cholas—particularly because the second half of the verse contains a distinct statement that his son Buddhavarmā was the submarine fire to the army of the Cholas. There is in fact no evidence that the Pallavas were dispossessed of their capital at any time during the period of the Sanskrit charters.

From the dates suggested above for the different kings, it will be seen that the invasion of Samudra-gupta must have taken place in the reign of Kumāravishṇu I. Either he was himself the Vishṇugopa of Kāñchī mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of the Gupta monarch, or some close relative of his, say a younger brother. Little is known of the political events of this long period of about two centuries. Siṁha-varman I crowned the Gaṅga king Ayya-varman (*c.* A.D. 450), and his son Skanda-varman III likewise crowned Ayyavavarman's son, Mādhava II, *c.* 475. Vishṇugopa-varman I perhaps died as a *Yuvarāja*, although the title *Mahārāja* is applied to him in the Chura *praśasti* of his grandson. Siṁha-varman II doubtless enjoyed a long and prosperous reign, as he is found issuing the largest number of grants. A Chola inscription from Tirukkaḷukkunṟam mentions a grant to the temple of the Mūlasthāna in that village originally made by Skandaśishya and continued by Pādāvikoṇḍa Narasinga-Pottaraiyar.[17] The second king was clearly Narasiṁha-varman I; but the identity of Skandaśishya is not easy, as he may be anyone of the three Skanda-varmans that figure in the genealogy of Pallavas of the Sanskrit charters.

What happened after Vishṇugopa II is by no means clear. The Vāyalūr list at this point reads: Siṁha-varman, Vishṇugopa, Siṁha-varman, Siṁhavishṇu, Mahendra-varman. Hence some writers are

17 *EI*, III, 279.

inclined to assume that a Siṁha-varman III was the son of Vishṇugopa II and father of Siṁhavishṇu who begins the best known line of the Pallavas, late in the sixth century. And the name Siṁha-varman for the father of Siṁhavishṇu is supported by the Vélūrpāḷaiyam plates.[18] But the relation of this Siṁha-varman to Vishṇugopa II and the rulers of the Sanskrit charters, which rests only on the Vāyalūr list, must get some confirmation before we can accept it as a settled fact.

IV. THE KALABHRAS

In the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas rose again and began a new epoch of glory and achievement in the northern and southern halves of the Tamil country, and during the period of their ascendancy and rivalry, the Cholas disappeared almost totally from the political map except for some chieftains in the Ceded Districts claiming descent from the Cholas of Uṛaiyūr or from Karikāla. In the interval between the close of the Saṅgam age and the revival of the power of the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas just mentioned, the Tamil land passed through a severe political and religious crisis, and the two rulers who inaugurated the period, the Pallava Siṁhavishṇu, and the *Pāṇḍyādhirāja* Kaḍuṅgon, are said to have begun their rule by putting an end to the power of the Kaḷabhras. On the Kaḷabhras we get few definite or clear data from our sources. The Vélvikuḍi grant[19] says that after that village, which had been granted as *brahmadeya* by Mudukuḍumi 'of many sacrifices'—a king known to the Saṅgam literature—was enjoyed by the donees for a long time, it was abrogated by 'a Kali king named Kaḷabhran who took possession of the extensive earth after displacing numberless great kings (*adhirajas*)'. Elsewhere the Kaḷabhras are mentioned in the plural. Whether the description 'Kali king' is meant only as a condemnation of the wickedness of the ruler who abrogated the long-standing charitable endowments or indicates that he belonged to the Kali dynasty of rulers cannot be determined. Who the Kaḷabhras were, how they succeeded in upsetting the social and political order of the Tamil country, and how long their evil rule lasted, are questions to which no answer can yet be given. The suggestion may be made that the Kaḷabhras were identical with the Kaḷvar, one of whose chieftains was Pulli of Véṅgaḍam, and that these half-wild people broke loose in the confusion caused by the inroad of Samudra-gupta and overran the Tamil country and ruled it for a time. But this view rests almost entirely on the dubious phonetic similarity between Kaḷvar and Kaḷabhra,[20] and has

18 V, 11.
19 *EI*, XVII, 291 ff.
20 See *PK*, 47-49 for a full discussion.

little tangible evidence in its favour. In the writings of Buddha-datta we seem to get singularly interesting data on the rule of the Kalabhras in the Chola country. And the Cholas, we know, suffered a longer eclipse than the Pāṇḍyas and did not recover till the ninth century. Though the exact date of Buddha-datta is not clearly settled, there is no doubt that he lived in the dark period of the South Indian history after the light of Śaṅgam literature fails, and before a fresh dawn commences with the revival of Pallava and Pāṇḍya power.[21] He says that his *Vinayavinichchaya* was begun and finished when Achchutavikkanta of the Kaḷabbhakula was ruling the earth. He gives a glowing description of the Chola country and the port of Kāveripaṭṭinaṁ, but says not a word of the Cholas themselves. Late literary tradition in *Tamiḻnāvalar-charitai* knows of a king by name Achchuta who kept the three Tamil kings, Chera, Chola, and Pāṇḍya in confinement for a time. Some songs about him are cited by Amitasāgara in his *Yāpparuṅgalak-kārigai* in the tenth century A.D. Here we seem to have the genuine relics of Kaḷabhra rule and its consequences. Possibly there were other rulers besides Achchuta who were, like him, enemies of the Tamil powers and votaries of Buddhism. Some of the Purāṇic stories, narrated by Sekkiḻār in his *Periya-purāṇam,* also appear to refer to this period; the stories of Mūrti Nāyanār in which there is reference to a Karnāṭak king of Jaina persuasion ruling in Madurai, and of Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār, whom the Brāhmaṇas of Chidambaram declined to anoint in the manner in which they usually anointed the Chola monarchs, deserve particular mention. It seems probable, therefore, that the Kaḷabhra rule was marked by the capture of political power in the Tamil country and was possibly aided by an invasion from outside. It is perhaps not without significance that the revival of Pallava and Pāṇḍya political power is followed almost immediately by a strong religious reaction against Buddhism and Jainism, led by the celebrated *Nāyanārs* on the side of Śaivism and *Aḷvārs* on that of Vaishṇavism. All indications point to Siṁhavishṇu as the first monarch to strike a blow against the Kaḷabhra usurpation: the Pāṇḍya Kaḍuṅgon followed very soon in his wake and completed the task he had begun of terminating an alien tyranny and restoring its traditional polity to the country as a whole.

V. LATER PALLAVAS

For a period of well over two centuries after the fall of the Kaḷabhras, the Tamil country was divided between the Pallavas in the north and the Pāṇḍyas in the south with Kāñchī and Madurai for

21 *Buddhadatta's Manuals,* ed. by A. P. Buddhadatta (*PTS,* Pt. I, 1915, Pt. II, 1928.)

their respective capitals. There was a constant rivalry between them often breaking out in open war, and the boundary between the kingdoms oscillated about the line of the Kāverī, and the feudatory chieftains in the border territory often changed sides according to the exigencies of politics. The Pallavas, however, had to fight on two fronts, because they had also to contend with other enemies from across the Tuṅgabhadrā. The Chālukyas of Bādāmi, who rose to prominence in Western Deccan at the same time as the Pallavas of the line of Siṁhavishṇu, and soon established a collateral line of rulers in Eastern Deccan, were their first enemies. In the middle of the eighth century the main line of the Chālukyas was extinguished by the rise of the Rāshṭrakūṭas under Dantidurga, but in spite of dynastic connections between the Pallavas and Rāshṭrakūṭas, there was little abatement of hostility between the two powers on either side of the Tuṅgabhadrā. The entire period was marked by a natural tendency for the enemies of the Pallavas to act in concert, and the Pāṇḍyas are often found co-operating with the Deccani power. On the other hand, the rulers of Ceylon, being neighbours of the Pāṇḍyas across a narrow sea, were hostile to them, and often fought on the side of the Pallavas. But the age of the Pallava rule is more remarkable for its achievements in the realm of the spirit than for its politics and warfare. It witnessed a widespread religious revival the roots of which undoubtedly go back to the dark age preceding it. This revival ended in the definite weakening, though not total disappearance, of Jainism and Buddhism, and the secure establishment of Śaivism and Vaishṇavism in the Tamil country. It led to the glorification of almost every shrine dedicated to Śiva and Vishṇu and the rise of a popular devotional literature which has remained the most precious heritage of the Tamils. Equally striking was the advance registered in the domains of architecture and sculpture. The celebrated Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hiuan Tsang visited the Pallava and Chālukya courts, among others, in the middle of the seventh century, and has left an interesting account of them.

Siṁhavishṇu (A.D. 575-600) was lord of the entire country between the Kṛishṇā and the Kāverī, and is said to have seized the Chola country with all its areca-groves and paddy-fields.[22] He was a devotee of Vishṇu and bore the title Avanisiṁha (lion of the earth). According to a literary tradition the great poet Bhāravi visited his court.[23] The portrait of Siṁhavishṇu is found sculptured in the Ādivarāha temple of Māmallapuraṁ; the king wears a tall crown besides other

22 Velūrpāḷaiyam, v. 11.

23 See Gopalan: *Pallavas of Kāñchī*, 43; and Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature* xvi.

ornaments and is seated on a throne, and two of his queens, also with jewelled crowns, stand on either side of him.[24]

VI. MAHENDRA-VARMAN I

Mahendra-varman I (A.D. 600-30), the son and successor of Siṁha-vishṇu, was a versatile genius whose strongly-marked individuality secures him a place among the most notable figures of history. He was not only soldier and statesman, but religious reformer, architect, poet, and musician. He was fond of many titles among which occur Vichitra-chitta, Mattavilāsa, Guṇabhara, Śatrumalla, Lalitāṅkura, Avanibhājana and Saṅkīrṇajāti, besides several others even more curious with Telugu forms and endings, found engraved in the ornate Grantha character of his time on the beams and pillars of the upper cave on the rock fort at Trichinopoly. We read in the Kaśākuḍi plates[25] that he annihilated his chief enemies at Puḷḷalūr, about fifteen miles north of Kāñchīpuram. Though the enemy is not named, it is obvious that he was the powerful Chālukya ruler of Bādāmi, Pulakeśin II, of whom the Aihoḷe inscription records that 'he caused the splendour of the lord of the Pallavas, who had approached him in strength and eminence,[26] to be obscured by the dust of his army, and to vanish behind the walls of Kāñchīpura'. After his accession to the throne in A.D. 609-10, Pulakeśin left his younger brother Vishṇu-vardhana in charge at Bādāmi,[27] and started on an extensive campaign of conquest in Eastern Deccan (*c.* A.D. 618). He overthrew in quick succession Southern Kosala, Kaliṅga, and the kingdoms of the Vishṇukuṇḍins and the Durjayas, and then, crossing the Kṛishṇā river, invaded the Pallava country. That the invader met the Pallava forces at Puḷḷalūr, very near their capital city, gives a measure of the strength and swiftness of the Chālukya advance and the success that

24 *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Archaeology (Southern circle)*, 1922-23, p. 94. Other identifications are proposed in *MASI*, 26 and 599, XII, p. iii (Narasiṁha-varman I and Mahendra-varman II).

25 *SII*, II, No. 73, v. 22.

26 The phrase I have rendered into 'who had approached him in strength and eminence' is, in the original, *ākrantātmabalonnatim*. This was translated by Kielhorn into 'who had opposed the rise of his power' implying that the Pallava had opposed the rise of Pulakeśin and thus given him offence. The thesis has been developed with some elaboration at *SII*, XI (i), p. 11. But there is in fact no evidence of the Pallavas having meddled in Chālukyan affairs, and I think that the long-drawn Chālukya-Pallava conflict was started by the martial ambitions of Pulakeśin II who aspired to a position of dominance in the South, like that of his contemporary Harsha-vardhana in the North, and could not brook the independence of a rival power. See *JAHC*, I, pp. 166-71.

27 *IA*, XIX, p. 309—Satara plates of Vishṇu-vardhana of eighth year of Pulakeśin II, Kielhorn's List, No. 547.

attended it. The Pallava claims to have annihilated the enemy, while the Aihole inscription implies that Mahendra-varman had to take shelter behind the fortifications of his capital. Though Kāñchīpuram was saved, the northern provinces of the Pallava kingdom were evidently lost to the enemy. After his return to Bādāmi, Pulakeśin deputed his brother to the east to settle the newly conquered territory, and that was the beginning of the line of Eastern Chālukyas of Veṅgī.

Mahendra-varman was a follower of Jainism to start with, and then, under the influence of Tirunāvukkaraśu or Appar, himself a Jain converted to Saivism by his sister, changed over to Śaivism. The event is attested by a significant pun on the word *liṅga* in a verse in the Trichinopoly rock inscription of the monarch.[28] Tradition avers that the Pallava monarch demolished Jaina foundations at Pāṭalipuram (Cuddalore) and elsewhere, and used their material in the construction of a Śiva temple, Guṇadh(bh?)ara-īśvaram at Tiruvadi in South Arcot district. But this appears unlikely as it conflicts with what we know of this tolerant and cultured monarch from other sources. He deprecated extreme and corrupt religious practices, and turned the laugh against the Kāpālikas and Buddhist *bhikshus* in his rollicking farce (*prahasana*) entitled *Mattavilāsa*,[29] which impresses the reader by its remarkable freedom from the sectarian intolerance that was growing in the period. He studied music under Rudrāchārya, and composed exercises for the practice of students on a variety of the *vīṇā* known as Parivādinī, and had them engraved on rock at Kuḍumiyāmalai (Pudukkottai) in the southern border of his kingdom. With him begins in South India the practice of scooping out of the live rock *maṇḍapas* and temples of simple and impressive designs, and in one of his inscriptions he glories in his capacity to raise shrines without the use of brick, timber, metal or mortar.[30] A labelled panel in the Varāha temple at Māmallapura bears sculptures depicting Mahendra-varman pointing out the sanctum of the temple to two of his queens whom he is leading to it.[31] The paintings in the rock-cut

28 *SII*, I, No. 33, v. 2.

29 Though the *Bhagavadajjuka* is mentioned together with this play in l. 6 of *SII*, IV, No. 36, there is some doubt about the authorship of *Bhagavadajjuka*, sometimes attributed to a certain Bodhāyanakavi. The story of Jains being persecuted rests on the relatively late evidence of the *Periya Purāṇam*.

30 *EI*, IV, p. 152.

31 The labels above two panels read simply: *Śrī Siṁhaviṇṇu Pōtādhirāyan* and *Śrī Mahendra Pōtādhirājan*. I prefer the older identification of these figures with first two monarchs of the Siṁhavishṇu line to the more recent attempts at other identifications (See Krishna Sastri in MASI, No. 26. and *SII*, XII, Introd., where Krishna Sastri's identification of Siṁmaviṇṇu with Narasiṁha-varman I is upheld and that of Mahendra with the obscure Mahendra-varman II is proposed). There

temple at Sittanavāśal (Pudukkottai), which used to be ascribed to Mahendra-varman's time on account of the architectural style of the cave-temple, are now regarded as belonging to a later period (ninth century) and to another line of rulers (Pāṇḍyas, particularly Śrī Māra Śrī-Vallabha).[32] There is some evidence that the cave was originally painted in the days of the Pallava ruler; but none of it has survived, and the extant paintings were made at the time of the renovation of the shrine by Madurai Āśiriyan Iḷañ-Gautaman in the reign of the Pāṇḍya ruler mentioned above.

VII. NARASIṀHA-VARMAN I

During the reign of Narasiṁha-varman I Mahāmalla (A.D. 630-68), the son and successor of Mahendra-varman I, Pulakeśin II renewed his attack on the Pallavas, evidently because he was not satisfied with his achievements against them in his first invasion. But he paid a heavy price, for not only did Narasiṁha-varman inflict a number of defeats on the invading forces at Pariyala, Śūramāra, and Maṇimaṅgala—the last mentioned place being only about 20 miles east of Kāñchīpuram, but the Pallava monarch turned the tables on the Chālukya and advanced with a powerful army to the heart of the enemy kingdom and laid siege to Bādāmi (Vātāpi). In the fighting that ensued Pulakeśin lost his life (A.D. 642), and Narasiṁha-varman earned the title *Vātāpikoṇḍa*. His occupation of the city is attested by an inscription, dated in his thirteenth regnal year, engraved on the rock behind the temple of Mallikārjunadeva at Bādāmi.[33] In his wars against the Chālukyas, Narasiṁha is said to have been actively assisted by Mānavarman, an exiled prince from Ceylon. Later, the Sinhalese prince, who wanted to gain the throne of Ceylon, was provided with armies on two occasions by the Pallava monarch whom he had served so loyally.[34] The success achieved on his landing in Ceylon proved to be temporary, and he had once again to seek refuge in the Pallava court till a second attempt resulted in his capture of Anurādhapura.[35] The expeditions to Ceylon, led by Mānavarman, started from Māmallapuraṁ, which takes its name from a title of Narasiṁha. The rising importance of the port in this period is borne out by references to it by Hiuan Tsang and in the

is no reason why later Pallava kings who built the Varāha temple should not have caused their great ancestors to be portrayed in preference to themselves or their immediate predecessors.

32 *PIHC*, 1944 (Madras), pp. 170-73.

33 *SII*, I, p. 148; II, pp. 15-17; XI (i), No. 1.

34 *SII*, II, No. 98, v. 12.

35 *CV*, Ch. 47.

hymns of Tirumaṅgai Ālvār. The Kaśākuḍi plates[36] refer to the conquest of Laṅkā and of Vātāpi (Bādāmi) as the chief achievements of Narasiṁha, and say that his fame rivalled that of Rāma and Agastya. The Chinese Master of Law, Hiuan Tsang, visited Kāñchīpuram most probably a little before the despatch of the expedition against Bādāmi, and noted that Buddhism of the Sthavira school and Digambara Jainism flourished in the city besides Hinduism. He noted that it was the birthplace of the celebrated Dharmapāla, who became the abbot of the great *vihāra* of Nālandā and was the author of well-known works on Buddhistic logic and theology. He also notes that Buddhism flourished in Malakūta (the Pāṇḍya country), perhaps from hearsay. Narasiṁha-varman was a great builder and doubtless did much to embellish the sea-port which came to be called Māmallapuram[37] after him; many of the cave-temples and sculptures in that place give evidence of the high quality of the artistic tradition current in his reign.

VIII. PARAMEŚVARA-VARMAN I AND HIS SUCCESSORS

How long Narasiṁha-varman held Bādāmi cannot be determined. The Pallava occupation brought about a crisis in the affairs of the Chālukyan kingdom; but Vikramāditya I, the ablest of the sons of Pulakeśin II, saved the kingdom from disruption, restored its unity after clearing it of invaders, and proclaimed himself king in A.D. 655. He claims victories against three successive Pallava monarchs, and Narasiṁha-varman is the first among them.[38] We must take it therefore that Chālukyan recovery began with a war waged by Vikramāditya against Narasiṁha which brought about the withdrawal of Pallava troops from the Chālukya country. The Cholas, Cheras, and Pāṇḍyas, as well as the Kaḷabhras, are counted among the enemies of Narasiṁha, but as no details are forthcoming, it is not easy to say if this is history or just empty boast. There was peace between the Chālukyas and Pallavas for the rest of Narasiṁha's reign which must be taken to have come to a close, not in 655 or 660, but some years later still, say about 667 or 668, if we accept the indications from statements in the contemporary Chālukya charters of Vikramāditya I. Narasiṁha was followed on the throne by his son Mahendra-varman II who had a short reign in which he is said to have encouraged the *ghaṭikā* (college of learned Brāhmaṇas) in the capital city,[39] and promoted many charitable works. Vikramā-

36 *SII*, II, No. 73, v. 22.

37 How the place got the name Mahābalipuram is a mystery, though some hasty history has been based at times on this popular name.

38 Gadvāl plates, *EI*, X, 101, v. 3.

39 Kaśākuḍi, *SII*, II, 346, v. 23

ditya I claims to have caused the pride of Mahendra to go down. The statement appears to find its explanation in an obscure inscription in the Mysore country[40] which records a fight between Mahendra and Śīlāditya. The latter may be identified with the son of Jayasiṁha, a younger brother of Vikramāditya, and Mahendra may well stand for the Pallava monarch. If these identifications are correct, the Chālukya-Pallava conflict must be taken to have re-opened after the death of Narasiṁha-varman with an advance of the Chālukyas through the Gaṅga territory, and an attempt on the part of Mahendra-varman II to resist it—this time when the invading forces were still far away from the capital. Mahendra-varman II was followed on the throne by Parameśvara-varman I (A.D. 670-80). In the Kūram grant of his own reign Parameśvara is clearly described as the son of Mahendra-varman II, and this must be accepted as the true relation between the two rulers.[41]

Parameśvara-varman I was the third Pallava monarch whom Vikramāditya claims to have defeated in battle. And in his war against the Pallavas, the Chālukya ruler had the active assistance not only of the Gaṅgas who acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pallavas or the Chālukyas according to the dictates of their temporary interests, but also of Arikesari, king of the distant Pāṇḍyas of the South.

That Vikramāditya was aided by the Gaṅgas and led his expedition through their country is a legitimate inference from the facts that he is known to be the son of a Gaṅga princess, possibly Gaṅgamahādevī at whose request the Gadvāl plates were issued in A.D. 674, and that four years earlier we find Vikramāditya issuing his Honnūr plates from his camp at Malliyūr (Malaiyūr in the Wandiwash *taluk*) at the instance of a Gaṅga prince by name Mahādeva. So it is clear that the attempt of Mahendra-varman II to stop the Chālukya invasion did not succeed, and it is not unlikely that the Pallava ruler perished in his attempt. Early in the reign of his successor Parameśvara-varman, Vikramāditya continued his victorious march against the Pallava capital and encamped at Malliyūr near Kāñchīpuram. Instead of allowing himself to be shut up in his capital and facing a siege, Parameśvara made his escape from Kāñchī to be able to organize the resources of his kingdom for the relief of his capital and the repulse of his enemy. He was in great difficulty for some

40 *MAR*, 1923, p. 83, No. 72; *IHQ*, V, 325.

41 The Kaśākuḍi and the Udayendiram plates of the reign of Nandi-varman II (*SII*, II, Nos. 73 and 74) leave the relation indefinite; the former uses the word *paśchāt* after Mahendra II and the latter *tataḥ*. Krishna Sastri suggests that Parameśvara I was the younger brother, not son, of Mahendra II (*SII*, II, 504). The direct statement of the Kūram grant, it will be noticed, is not contradicted by the later charters. The Velūrpālaiyam plates omit Mahendra II altogether.

time and was defeated at Śaṅkaramaṅgai (not identified) by the Pāṇdya Arikesari (as stated in the Sinnamanūr plates). But, undaunted, he attempted with much success a bold diversion by launching a counter-invasion into the Chālukya country where Vikramāditya's son Vinayāditya and grandson Vijayāditya were able to hold their own against the invading force, which had advanced almost up to the very gate of the capital city, and returned with a heavy booty.[42] Vikramāditya, in his turn, pursued Parameśvara-varman to the south, and fixed his camp for a while at Uṛaiyūr (Uragapura) near Trichinopoly on the southern bank of the Kāvérī, where doubtless he effected a junction with his Pāṇḍya ally. Before proceeding against the allies, Parameśvara thought it necessary to deal with Bhūvikrama, the Gaṅga subordinate of Vikramāditya. A battle was fought at Viḷande, but it went against the Pallava ruler who lost to his enemy a valued crown-jewel, the necklace which contained the gem *ugrodaya.* Though a defeat in a military sense, the battle served its purpose in the strategy followed by Parameśvara, who, not minding defeats in individual battles, was bent upon winning the war. It rendered the Gaṅga relatively innocuous at the time of the main engagement in the whole war which occurred at Peruvaḷanallūr in the Lālguḍi *taluk* of the Trichinopoly district.[43] The Kūram grant gives a long and turgid account of the battle which it ends by saying : 'he (Parameśvara), unaided, made Vikramāditya, whose army consisted of several *lakshas,* take to flight, covered by a rag'. This is, of course, an exaggeration, but Vikramāditya had to accept the verdict of the battle and withdraw from the Pallava country, and found himself in no position to renew the conflict.

Parameśvara-varman is called Ugradaṇḍa and 'destroyer of the city of Raṇarasika' in an inscription of his son from Kāñchīpuram.[44] Raṇarasika was a title of Vikramāditya I, and by his city was doubtless meant Vātāpi.[45] Parameśvara had many other fine titles like Atyantakāma, Chitramāya, Guṇabhājana, Śrībhara, Raṇajaya, and Vidyāvinīta Pallava, the last name occurring in the Kūram grant, and the rest in the inscriptions found in a Gaṇeśa temple at Māmallapuram.[46] He is also called Lokāditya in a Kailāsanātha inscription of his grandson Mahendra III.[47]

Parameśvara-varman's son and successor was Narasiṁha-varman II (A.D. 680-720) better known as Rājasiṁha. There was a lull in the

42 Jejuri plates, *EI*, XIX, 62; Nerur grant, *IA*, ix, 126.
43 Name in Udayendiram plate, *SII*, II, No. 74.
44 *SII*, I, No. 24.
45 *BG*, I, (ii), 329, n. 5.
46 *EI*, X, 8.
47 *SII*, I, No. 27.

conflict with the Chālukyas, and Rājasiṁha's long reign was an era of peace and prosperity. The king is hailed as an adept in the path of Śaiva Siddhānta, and he erected many excellent temples of Śiva in different parts of his realm. The most celebrated among them, both for architectural quality and the excellence of sculpture, is the Rājasiṁheśvara, also called Kailāsanātha, at the capital. In its construction queen Raṅgapatākā and prince Mahendra-varman III, the heir-apparent, took much personal interest. The date of its consecration had to be put off in response to a divine voice advising the king that on the date, originally fixed for the ceremony, the Lord was entering another temple constructed over a long time in the mind of Pūśalār-Nāyanār; the story is given at length in the *Periya Purāṇam,* but the main incident, the divine voice heard by the king, is recorded in a contemporary inscription in the Kailāsanātha temple itself.[48] Other temples built by Rājasiṁha were the Shore temple at Māmallapuram, the Airāvateśvara at Kāñchīpuram, and the Śiva temple at Panamalai, all of which contain his inscriptions, and some of them still possess traces of excellent paintings apparently coeval with the temples. Literature flourished, and there is good reason to hold that the great Sanskrit rhetorician Daṇḍin spent many years in the Pallava court in Rājasiṁha's reign. Maritime trade grew and embassies were sent to China. The Chinese annals record that ambassadors from Śrī Narasiṁhapota-varman reached the Imperial Court in A.D. 720 and that the emperor honoured them with 'a robe of flowered silk, a golden girdle, a purse with an emblem in the form of fish, and the seven objects'; the title of 'the army which cherished virtue' was conferred on the Pallava army which was to be employed to chastize the Arabs and the Tibetans, who commanded considerable power in the Bay of Bengal at the time and perhaps obstructed trade; and Narasiṁha himself was honoured with the title 'King of the Kingdom of South India'.[49] Rājasiṁha carried the love of ornate *birudas* far beyond any of his predecessors, and more than 250 of his titles are found on the way of Kailāsanātha alone. The Vélūrpāḷaiyam plates state that Narasiṁha II re-established the *ghaṭikā* (college) of the Brāhmaṇas besides recording his construction of the stone temple of Kailāsanātha.[50] Rājasiṁha was followed on the throne by his elder son Parameśvara-varman II. An inscription, dated in the third year of his reign, at Tiruvadi, S. Arcot, records a gift of gold to Vīraṭṭāneśvara temple. After he had ruled for about ten years, the Chālukyas appear to have renewed their aggression against the Pallavas. A Kannaḍa

48 *SII,* I, No. 24, v. 7.
49 *Foreign Notices,* 116-17.
50 *SII,* II, 98, v. 13.

stone inscription of the thirty-fifth year (A.D. 730-31) of Vijayāditya states that Yuvarāja Vikramāditya II conquered Kāñchīpuram and levied tribute from the Pallava Paramesvara and that on his return he made the gift of the villages Uḷchala and Pariyaḷa to a Gaṅga prince.[51] This was the first of the three raids on Kāñchī with which Vikramāditya II is credited in an undated inscription of his queen Lokamahādevī at Paṭṭadakal.[52] The Gaṅga prince of the Uḷchala inscription was Durvinīta Eṛeyappa, son of Srīpurusha. When the Chālukya and Gaṅga forces withdrew from his capital, Paramesvara evidently invaded Gaṅgavāḍi to punish Śrīpurusha for the active part he had taken in last Chālukyan expedition against Kāñchī. Śrīpurusha met him in battle, slew him at Viḷande, and appropriated to himself the royal umbrella of the Pallava together with the title of Permānaḍi.[52a]

IX. NANDI-VARMAN II

The death of Paramesvara-varman II (c. A.D. 731) was followed by a crisis in the affairs of the Pallava kingdom owing to failure of succession in the royal line, Mahendra-varman III having evidently predeceased his elder brother. A series of inscribed panels of sculptures in the Vaikunṭhaperumāl temple in Kāñchīpuram narrate how the next ruler came to be chosen, after depicting the entire legend and history of the descent and rule of the Pallava monarchs that preceded him.[53] The anarchy that followed the demise of Paramesvara II appears to be represented by a blank space in the series of panelled sculptures. Then the *mātras, ghaṭikā,* and the *mūlaprakṛiti* of the capital approached Hiraṇya-varman *mahārāja* of the Kāḍavésakula seeking his aid for filling the throne in a suitable manner. From the Kaśākuḍi plates we learn that Hiraṇya was fifth in descent from Bhīma-varman, younger brother of Siṁhavishṇu, who began the line of imperial Pallavas.[54] Hiraṇya-varman consulted the *kulamallar,* but none of them was inclined to take up the charge; then he consulted his own sons Śrīmalla, Raṇamalla, Saṅgrāmamalla, and Pallavamalla; the first three declined the offer, but the last, also called Paramesvara, agreed to go as king. His statement was received by his father with mingled feelings, as he was then only twelve years of age, and

51 'Ten years of Epigraphy', *Ancient India,* No. 5.

52 *IA,* X, 164-65.

52a *EC,* VIII, Nagar 35 (A.D. 1077). The evidence is late but fits in very well and may be accepted.

53 *MASI,* No. 63.

54 The Udayendiram plates of yr. 21, *SII,* II, 74, are clearly wrong in making Nandi II son of Paramesvara II.

the joy at the prospect of his son becoming king of the great kingdom was diminished by grief at the prospect of separation from him. He was indeed inclined to veto the boy's going, when the aged statesman (*vṛiddhāgamika*) Taraṇḍikoṇḍa-Pōśarī, who foresaw a bright future for the boy, persuaded the aged father to waive his objection and let the boy go and occupy the vacant throne. Among the insignia brought by the deputation from Kāñchī was a crown in the shape of an elephant's head, and this roused the curiosity of Hiraṇya-varman. At last Pallavamalla was invested by his father and Pōśar (Bhoja) with the insignia of royalty, and after taking leave of his father, he rode on the back of an elephant all the way to the capital city where he was received by the great *sāmantas, nagarattār, mūlaprakṛiti,* and Kāḍakka Muttaraya who had advanced far out of the city when they heard of the arrival of the new king. Then followed his formal installation in the capital under the title Nandi-varman. These incidents, recorded in such authentic detail in the sculptures and labels on the walls of the temple erected by Nandi-varman II, are put more briefly in the Kaśākuḍi plates of his twenty-second year, which state that he was chosen by his subjects (*vṛitaḥ prajābhiḥ*) for his high office.

The young Nandi-varman II enjoyed a long reign of sixty-five years.[55] With the aid of faithful and able generals at first, and then by his own diplomatic skills and powers of organization, he succeeded in upholding the unity and extent of the Pallava kingdom in the face of many difficulties from different quarters. The events of his reign are well attested by several grants and inscriptions of the king himself and a number of records of other contemporary dynasties. One of the earliest troubles that Nandi-varman II encountered was the appearance of a pretender to the throne in the form of a Chitramāya who is said to have been of Pallava extraction and who seems to have been promised support not only by a section of the people in the Pallava kingdom but also by the contemporary Pāṇḍya ruler Māra-varman Rājasiṁha I. Chitramāya had also other allies—the Chera (Villava) and the Śabara chief Udayana, probably the lord of some wild territory in the northern marches of the Pallava kingdom. It is not known how and where the enemies of Nandi-varman joined their forces; but it is clear that they marched into the heart of the Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, defeated Nandi-varman in battle and forced him to take refuge in the fort of Nandipura to which they laid siege.

From the Udayendiram plates of Nandi-varman we learn that the great general Udayachandra served Nandi-varman with consum-

55 666 of 1922.

mate ability and unstinted devotion. He is said to have belonged to the Pūchān-kula, a family that had served the Pallavas for many generations. He is also described as the lord of the Vegavatī river and of the city of Vilvala. He restored the kingdom in its entirety to Pallavamalla by rushing to his rescue when he saw him beleaguered in Nandipura by the Tamil kings, working havoc among his enemies with his sword and putting to death the Pallavarāja Chitramāya and many others; he also inflicted several defeats on the foes of the Pallava monarch at Naṁbavena (Vèṁbil?), Chūtavana, Śaṅkaragrāma, Nellūr, Nelvéli, Śurāvalundur and other battle-fields. In the terrible battle of Nelvéli he clove the head of the opposing Śabara king Udayana and seized his royal banner made of a peacock's tail. Though the names of the battles mentioned in the Pāṇḍya charters are different from those of the Udayendiram plates, we need not doubt that we have before us two versions of one and the same war fought with great tenacity over several years and on a wide front. In his hymn on Parameśvara-viṇṇagaram, i.e. the Vaikunṭhaperumāḷ temple built by Parameśvara (Nandi-varman Pallavamalla), Tirumangai Āḻvār states that the Pallava king struck terror into the heart of the Pāṇḍya in battle, and names the battles of Maṇṇai and Nenmeli where the Villava (Chera) turned and fled.

The geography of these campaigns cannot be worked out satisfactorily, as there is no means of determining the order of the numerous battles mentioned on either side, each apparently laying stress just on those engagements in which it gained an advantage. The siege of Nandipuram was the central event, and the chief concern of Udayachandra was to raise the siege and relieve his master. Nandipura was identified with Nāthankoyil near Kumbakonam till recently, on the strength of the alternative name Nandipuraviṇṇagaram applied to it in the hymns of Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār. While Tirumaṇgai's hymn[56] is unmistakable evidence that Nandi-varman II erected a Vishṇu temple at Nāthankoyil some time in his reign, it may be doubted if so soon after his accession and in the midst of the confusion prevailing in the Pallava kingdom at that time his authority extended so far south. Further, on the assumption that Nandi-varman stood siege at Nāthankoyil, it has not been easy to identify the places where his general Udayachandra fought for the relief of his master. The part played by the Śabara chief in these campaigns also points to a more northern location for Nandipura. It was most probably the modern Nandivarman in the Chingleput district which is referred to in inscriptions as Nandipura and which continued to be the headquartres of a division

56 Periya-Tirumoli, 5.10.

under Vijayanagara.[56a] On this assumption the other battle-fields are seen to be distributed round about the neighbouring region. Nimbavana may be Peppaṅgulam near Kāñchī;[56b] Māṅgāḍu in Sriperumbudur taluk will represent Chūtavana.[56c] Saṁkarampāḍi in the Arkonam taluk would be Śaṅkaragrāma; and Śūrāvaluṅdūr retains the same name to this day and is situated in the Chidambaram *tāluk*. Nenmali must be the same as Nemmali near Tiruttani, about 30 miles to the north of Kāñchī. The Udayendiram grant states that Udayachandra destroyed the fort of Kālīdurga which was protected by the Goddess Kālī and defeated the Pāṇḍya army at the village of Maṇṇaikkuḍi. Although the location of Kālīdurga is unknown, Maṇṇaikkuḍi may be identified with Maṇṇivākkam in the Chingleput *tāluk*[56d] which contains a temple called Maṇṇīśvaram. Most of the battles must have been fought before the siege of Nandipuram was raised as is implied in the statement in the inscription that they were fought by Udayachandra on behalf of the Pallava. This war against Chitramāya and the Pāṇḍya Rājasiṁha I was indeed the first crisis in the long reign of Nandi-varman II, and he was enabled to tide over it successfully by the steadfast devotion and the brilliant generalship of Udayachandra.

Another achievement of Udayachandra was his campaign in the north. 'In the northern region also', says the Udayendiram record, '(he) pursued the Nishāda chief, called Pṛithivīvyāghra, who, in desiring to become very powerful (*prabalāyamānam*), was running after the horse of the *aśvamedha,* defeated (him), ordered (him) out of the district (*vishaya*) of Vishṇurāja, (which) he subjected to the Pallava, and seized faultless pearl necklaces of excellent lustre, an immeasurable heap of gold and elephants.' Who performed the horse sacrifice and let loose the horse which Pṛithivīvyāghra was pursuing is not stated. Hultzsch attributed the sacrifice to the Nishāda chieftain himself and translated the phrase *prabalāyamānam* as above.[57] But another view is possible. The horse might have belonged to Nandi-varman II who, after his victories in the recent wars which secured the throne for him, might have sought to assert his imperial position by a horse sacrifice. Pṛithivīvyāghra, a feudatory of the Eastern Chālukya Vishṇu-vardhana III, evidently wanted to obstruct the act of the Pallava king, and as usual, Udayachandra defended his master's in-

56a 255 of 1910, 165 of 1932-33 and 34 of 1934-35. This and the identification of other battle-fields have been suggested by K. R. Venkataraman in a paper read before *AIOC*, Oct. 1951 (Lucknow).

56b 416 to 420 of 1902.

56c 352 of 1908 (*SII*, XII, 53), 351 of 1908.

56d 169 of 1929-30.

57 *SII*, II, 364 and 372.

terest by punishing the Nishāda chief, driving him from his territory which he held of the Eastern Chālukya, and annexing it to the Pallava dominion. It seems quite probable that Vishṇu-vardhana was also privy to his feudatory's effort to seize the Pallava horse. There is, however, no other evidence of Nandi-varman having performed the sacrifice. The exact location of Pṛithivīvyāghra's fief is also not known.[58]

Of his relations with the Chālukyas of Bādāmi the inscriptions of Nandi-varman II maintain a discreet silence; but the records of the Chālukyas including a Kannaḍa inscription of Vikramāditya II on a pillar in the Kailāśanātha temple of Kāñchīpuram give a fairly full account.[59] Vikramāditya II, we learn, was in high spirit after his attainment of the world's sovereignty, and he then made up his mind to destroy his natural foe, the Pallava, who had cast a shadow upon the glory of his ancestors. He reached the Tuṇḍāka country by forced marches, his Gaṅga feudatory Śrīpurusha and perhaps also the Eastern Chālukya Vishṇu-vardhana co-operating with him, defeated in battle and drove from the field the Pallava king Nandi-varman who had advanced to meet him, seized his insignia, viz the instruments of martial music known as *kaṭumukhavāditra* and *samudra-ghosha* together with the *khaṭvāṅga* banner, captured a number of high class war elephants and heaps of bright jewels, and entered the city of Kāñchī without doing any damage to it. He pleased the people of the Pallava capital by his liberal gifts to Brahmins, the poor, and the indigent, and obtained great fame by returning to Rājasiṁheśvara, which Narasiṁhapota-varman had built of stone, and to all other temples, the heaps of gold that belonged to them. Vikramāditya's valour caused distress to the southern kings, and he erected a *jayastambha* in the form of his great fame that spread to the southern ocean. The Kāñchīpuram inscription says that Vikramāditya took Kāñchī and became happy at the sight of the wealth of Rājasiṁheśvara which he returned to the deity. It adds at the end that it was written by order of the Vallabha-durjaya. Thus, it is clear that Vikramāditya was the aggressor on this occasion. The disgrace of Narasiṁha I's occupation of Vātāpi and the inscription left by him

58 The surmise put forward by P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar in his Tamil work on *The Pallavas* (Pt. III, p. 7) that Pṛithivivyāghra was a Nāgavaṁśī king of Bastar seems to have no other basis than the word *vyāghra* (tiger) appearing in the name of the chieftain and also describing the flag of the Nāgavaṁśis. In the obscure phrase *niravadya-pramukhāṁśuhārān*, rendered by Hultszch into 'faultless pearl necklace of excellent lustre', some are inclined to see a reference to Chālukya Vijayāditya of Bādāmi who had the title Niravadya. N. Venkataramanayya, *The Eastern Chālukyas of Vengī*, p. 76.

59 Vakkaleri pl., *EI*, V, 200; Kendur pl., IX, 200; Kāñchī Ins., III: 359.

near one of the great temples of that city rankled in the mind of the Chālukya, and he paid back in the same coin by having an inscription of his own engraved in his own language on the largest and most beautiful of the numerous temples of the Pallavas in their capital city. No indication is found, either of the route followed by Vikramāditya in his expedition, or of the place where he met Nandi-varman in battle and defeated him. An inscription of the 15th year of Nandi-varman at Mallam in the Gudur *tāluk* of the Nellore district records a gift of gold to a temple made by order of the Chalukki-arasar on the request of Āḷuva-arasan, and this may well be accepted as an indication of the route followed by Vikramāditya either to Kāñchī or on his way back from there.[60] We may allow his claim to have spared the city and its temples from destruction and loot, and infer that Narasiṁha's occupation of Vātāpi, a century earlier, was marked by the same restraint and moderation. Some time later, another expedition against the Pallava kingdom by Vikramāditya's son Kīrti-varman II as *yuvarāja* was of the nature of a successful raid from which the Chālukya prince returned with a number of elephants, a vast amount of gold, and jewels seized from the Pallava monarch. This was the third and last of the expeditions against Kāñchī for which Vikramāditya is given credit in the undated inscription of his queen at Paṭṭadakal.

The next notable event of the reign of Nandi-varman was an invasion by the rising Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dantidurga. Starting on his victorious career some time about A.D. 742 when we find him already in occupation of Ellora, Danti-varman was rapidly building up his power: Taking advantage of the weakness and incapacity of Kīrti-varman II, he brought under his sway all the outlying provinces of the Chālukya empire before delivering his final attack on the home territory. He made his arms felt by the Gurjaras of Malwa, the rulers of Kosala and Kaliṅga, and the Telugu-Choḍas of Śrīśailam region before he appeared in Kāñchīpuram. His aim was not so much to defeat the Pallava monarch or seize territory from him, as to make sure of his goodwill and friendship in the pursuit of his designs against the Chālukya power. Danti-varman's invasion of Kāñchī is mentioned by Tirumaṅgai-Āḷvar, and we have every reason to believe that after an initial demonstration of force, Dantidurga struck up an alliance with Nandi-varman Pallavamalla to whom he gave his daughter Revā in marriage. She became the chief queen of the Pallava monarch and her son Danti-varman succeeded his father on the

60 Nellore Ins., 429-30. G. 454. *MAR*, 1941, p. 220, No. 45, from Tumkar district lso seems to refer to this expedition of Vikramāditya II.

throne.[61] The first Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion of Kāñchī may be placed in A.D. 750 or 751. Some years later, possibly about A.D. 783, Nandi-varman II led an expedition against the Gaṅga kingdom, captured the Gaṅga strongholds, defeated Śrīpurusha in battle, and forced him to surrender much wealth and restore the necklace which contained the precious gem *'ugrodaya'*.[62] The Gaṅga inscriptions claim victory in this battle for Śrīpurusha, and state that he killed the Kāḍuveṭṭi in battle and captured his state umbrella.[63] As a matter of fact it would seem further that as a result of the war Śrīpurusha lost some territory which the Pallava monarch handed over to his Bāṇa feudatory Jaya-nandi-varman.

The real foe of Pallavamalla was, however, the Pāṇḍya. The defeat of Pallava forces by the Paṇḍya Jaṭila Parāntaka at Péṇṇāgaḍam showed that the new ruler of the southern country was likely to be at least as troublesome as his father had been soon after his accession to the throne. Hence he sought to restrain the growth of Pāṇḍyan aggression by organizing a confederacy against Jaṭila, and entered into an alliance with the rulers of Koṅgu and Kerala as well as the Adigaimāns of Tagaḍūr. Jaṭila's war against the confederates of Pallavamalla and the successes that attended him will be described later, in connection with the Pāṇḍyas. The prime mover in the effort to restrain the Pāṇḍya did not escape unhurt. A Pāṇḍyan inscription of A.D. 776 mentions the destruction of Vembil and Jaṭila's encampment at Niyamam in the Tanjore district.[64] Another record, dated five years later, mentions the Pāṇḍyan king's camp at Araśūr on the banks of the Peṇṇār in the Toṇḍainād.[65] Further details are not forthcoming; but it is clear that the coalition against the Pāṇḍya failed utterly and that Nandi-varman II did not succeed in checking the expansion of the Pāṇḍyan empire.

In the midst of his preoccupations with Pāṇḍya expansion, Nandi-varman found it possible to co-operate with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda II in helping Gaṅga Śivamāra II to gain the throne against the opposition of his brother Duggamāra Ereyapa, and both the Rāshṭrakūṭa and Pallava monarchs are said to have been present at the coronation of Śivamāra II and tied the fillet of royalty on his forehead with their own hands.[66] This was perhaps in A.D. 778. And shortly after, when Govinda II saw his position threatened by the ambitions of his young-

61 Velūr plates, vv. 16-17.

62 Taṇḍan pl., *SII*, II, 557, v. 6; *EI*, XXII, 113.

63 *EC*, VII, Nagar 35; *MAR*, 1919-20, paras 51-52.

64 414 of 1904.

65 105 of 1905.

66 Alur grant of *Yuvarāja* Mārasiṅgha, II. 63-66, *MAR*, 1924, p. 74. Also *EC*, IX, Nl. 60, Maṇṇe grant, same prince, dated two years earlier.

er brother Dhruva Nirupama, both Śivamāra and Nandi-varman II went to his aid. But Govinda lost in the civil war that followed, and Dhruva became king about A.D. 780. One of his first tasks was to punish those who had allied themselves with Govinda in the recent conflict, and in pursuit of this plan Dhruva marched against Nandi-varman, who had to make his submission and yield a tribute of war elephants. His confederate Śivamāra was caught and imprisoned for several years. The milder treatment of Nandi-varman might have been due, partly to his independent status different from that of the Gaṅga feudatory, and partly to the fact that his chief queen Revā was a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess.

Nandi-varman II continued to rule till about A.D. 795, but there is no record of any important events in the last years of his reign. He was apparently greater in diplomacy than in war. He was well served in the early part of his reign by Udayachandra. The military record of his later years is by no means good; yet he found it possible to make his political influence felt practically over the whole of South India, and in the midst of great difficulties he maintained the power of the Pallava kingdom almost undiminished throughout his long reign. He was a worshipper of Vishṇu, and constructed the Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl temple, the Paramechchura-viṇṇagaram of Tirumaṅgai's hymns, one of the perfectly integrated temples in the Pallava style. If the *praśastis* in his records may be trusted, particularly the Kaśākuḍi grant, Nandi-varman must have possessed high accomplishments in archery, in the knowledge of elephant lore, in the composition of poetry, and in the arts of love. Learning flourished under his rule, and many hundreds of scholars are known to have received grants of land and other forms of encouragement from him and his courtiers. The longer inscriptions of the reign furnish ample evidence of the value attached to high literary form even in state documents. The celebrated Vaishṇava saint Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār was most probably his contemporary, as he makes frequent and intimate references in his hymns to the occurrences of Nandi-varman's reign. Nandi-varman was succeeded by Dandi-varman, his son, by the Rāshṭrakūṭa queen Revā.

The early years of Danti-varman's rule, which lasted for fifty-one years, must have coincided with the closing years of Nandi-varman Pallavamalla's reign.[67] Pāṇḍyan aggression under Varaguṇa I and his son Śrī Māra Śrīvallabha continued in the reign of Danti-varman and deprived him of much territory in the south. The Trichinopoly

67 262 of 1904 gives year 51 of Danti's reign. Pallavamalla was 31 when his marriage with Revā took place in A.D. 750; supposing Danti was born five years later he would have been 40 when his father died, and a rule of fifty one years after that date is quite improbable.

and Tanjore districts remained for some decades under the occupation of the Pāṇḍyas who, having deprived the Pallavas of half their dominions, were preparing to march on their capital itself. In the north Danti-varman was exposed to depredations from the powerful Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III in spite of their dynastic connection. About A.D. 803-4 Govinda, flushed with the great successes that had attended his arms in Northern India, made a dash against Kāñchī from his camp at Śrībhavana on the Narmadā, defeated Danti-varman in battle, and entered his capital. There he received the submission offered by an embassy from Ceylon, and then retired to the banks of the Tuṅgabhadrā where he fixed his camp at Rāmeśvara-tīrtha.[68] Danti-varman's reign was thus a period of defeat and disaster, and it seems a wonder that he continued to rule so long as he did. He appears, however, to have retained the loyal devotion of the Bāṇas to the end, as is seen from an inscription at Guḍimallam dated in his forty-ninth regnal year.[69] He married a Kadamba princess by name Aggalanimmati who gave birth to his far abler son Nandi-varman III.

Danti-varman's reign may be taken to have closed about A.D. 836. Nandi-varman III ruled for about twenty-five years, or a little less, from that date. One of his first tasks was to deal with Pāṇḍyan aggression which was threatening the very existence of the Pallava kingdom. In his difficulty he looked about for allies, and seems to have secured substantial aid from the Gaṅgas and even the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Early in his reign he gained a signal success in his enterprise. The Velūrpāḷaiyam plates of his sixth year state distinctly that he obtained the prosperity of the Pallava kingdom, which was difficult for others to get, by an exhibition of his prowess in the battle-field, and after a decisive defeat inflicted on his enemies. He is generally described in his records as Nandi-varman who gained kingdom after his victory at Teḷḷāṟu, a place about thirty miles south of Kāñchīpuram in the Wandiwash *tāluk* of the North Arcot district. The scene of the decisive battle is clear evidence of the extent of Pāṇḍyan aggression, which doubtless made it easy for Nandivarman to gain extraneous support for his attempt to recover his position. His Pāṇḍyan foe was doubtless Śrī Māra Śrīvallabha who was accompanied by the feudatories of his extensive empire, as we learn from the *Nandikkalambakam*, an anonymous Tamil poem of a conventional variety. According to the poem, Nandi III gained other victories at Paḷaiyāṟu Vellāṟu, Nallāṟu, Kurugoḍu, and elsewhere, and his army even advanced as far as the banks of the Vaigai. The battle at Paḷaiyāṟu, near Kumbakonam, seems to be confirmed by an inscription from

68 *IA*, XI, 126; *EI*, XVIII, 246 (Saryan Plates, verse 34).
69 *EI*, XI, 224.

Mysore which attributes a victory at that place to Deva, the son of Rāshṭrakūṭa Amoghavarsha I.[70] The Tamil poem describes him as the ruler of the good land watered by the Kāverī, as if to emphasize the recovery of territory long lost to the Pāṇḍas. There is no doubt that after his initial successes, Nandi III enjoyed several years of peaceful and prosperous rule, and the Pallava kingdom recovered remarkably from the disasters of his father's reign. Nandi-varman was a patron of arts and literature, and the *Bhāratam* was translated into Tamil under his patronage by Perundevanār,[71] to be distinguished from his namesake of the Śaṅgam age whose translation of the epic is no longer extant. The *Kalambakam* describes Nandi III as the lord of the four oceans, and says that he maintained a powerful navy. A Tamil inscription at Takua-pa in Siam on the west coast of the Malay peninsula mentions a tank called Avani-nāraṇam and a Vishṇu temple in its neighbourhood, both placed under the protection of the merchant guild known as Maṇigrāmam.[72] Avani-nāranam (Nārāyaṇa on earth) occurs as a title of Nandi-varman III in the *Nandikkalambakam*. Nandi-varman's queen was a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess, Śaṅkhā by name, most likely the daughter of Amoghavarsha I Nṛipatuṅga, as her son was also called Nṛipatuṅga.[73] Towards the close of Nandi-varman's reign, the Pāṇḍya Śrī Māra had recovered sufficiently to resume his aggressive policy against the Pallava ruler, and both the Sinnamanūr and Bāhūr grants agree that Śrī Māra gained a victory against the Pallava near Kumbakonam on this occasion (A.D. 860). Nandi-varman does not seem to have survived this defeat long.

Nṛipatuṅga, who was associated with his father at an early age, was held till recently to have ruled for about twenty-six years; but a record of his forty-first year[74] has come to light, and we may tentatively assign him to the period 855-96. Nṛipatuṅga, as *yuvarāja*, avenged his father's defeat at Kumbakonam, and in another battle on the banks of the small stream Arichit (Ariśil) he inflicted a crushing defeat on Śrī Māra, whose reign closed in gloom. As the result of his victory Nṛipatuṅga restored the integrity of the Pallava empire, and there is an inscription of his seventh regnal year[75] as far south as Nārttā-

70 *EC*, x, Cd. 76.

71 This is doubted, however, by S. Vaiyapuri who would place the poem in the thirteenth century A.D. in the time of Kōpperuñjiṅga, who won an important success at Tellāṟu also. The poem only mentions the battle won by the patron of the author without giving his name, and the language of the poem appears to Mr. Vaiyapuri to be more of the thirteenth century than the ninth.

72 *JOR*, VI, 300.

73 Bāhūr pl. *EI*, XVIII, 5, v, 14.

74 At Mathavalam, 'Ten Yeais of Indian Epigraphy' (Chhabra) *Ancient India* No. 5.

75 365 of 1904.

malai in Pudukkoṭṭai. The Bāṇas in the North Arcot region continued to acknowledge Pallava suzerainty, as an inscription from Guḍimallam testifies.[76] Education was encouraged under him, and the Bāhūr plates, dated in the eighth year of the reign, record the gift by one of his ministers of three entire villages to the *Vidyāsthāna* (college) at Bāhūr, controlled by the learned men of the place who organised the study of fourteen *gaṇas* in the institution. The *gaṇas* were obviously the four Vedas, six *aṅgas*, Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya, Purāṇa, and Dharmaśāstra.

The reign of Nṛipatuṅga witnessed the initial stages in the rise of the Cholas to power after centuries of obscurity. Possibly some years before his accession, the first ruler of the new Chola dynasty, Vijayālaya, captured Tanjore and made the city his headquarters. His son Āditya I is known to have succeeded him in A.D. 871. There is reason to suppose that in this period the Cholas were subordinate to the Pallavas, or at least friendly to them.

The chronology and order of succession after Nṛipatuṅga are not as clear as one would wish. If our assumption that Nṛipatuṅga's rule extended to 896 is correct, it means that he must have lived up to the eve of the effective Chola conquest of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. But there are no inscriptions of his after his twentieth year except the recently discovered one of the forty-first year. There are two other Pallava princes whose relations to each other and to Nṛipatuṅga are by no means clear. They are Aparājita and Vijaya Kampavarman. Aparājita, whose inscriptions are confined to the north of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam and go up to the eighteenth year, figures in some important events which must have fallen in Nṛipatuṅga's reign. Kampa-varman also must have been his contemporary, for on a slab at Tiruvoṟṟiyūr on which three inscriptions are engraved continuously, a record of the seventh year of Kampa-varman precedes another in the sixth year of Aparājita.[77] There is reference to a Nandi-Kampeśvara temple at Kāṭṭutumbūr in an inscription at Śōḷapuram (N. Arcot).[78] This means that the temple was built by Nandi-Kampa, i.e. Kampa the son of Nandi. It is thus possible that Kampa was a younger brother of Nṛipatuṅga, and Aparājita another brother or cousin of his, with both of whom Nṛipatuṅga shared his power. Aparājita seems to have been the ablest soldier of them all. Not only does he figure prominently in the last military events at the close of Pallava history, while the two others are not heard of, but in a Chola record of the reign of

76 228 of 1903.
77 *SII.* XII, 90 Intr.
78 423 of 1902.

Kulottuṅga III he is still remembered, centuries later, as Rāja-mārttaṇḍa (Sun among kings) Aparājita-varman.[79] The conquest of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam was effected by Āditya by about the twenty-seventh year of his reign (A.D. 897), and taking this to be the last year of Aparājita's reign we may suppose that he began his rule some time in 879, and Kampa-varman, a year or so earlier.

It would appear in fact that Nṛipatuṅga, who began his career with the victory of Arichit against the Pāṇḍya Śrī Mara, summoned Kampa-varman and Aparājita to share his power in order to avoid possible domestic dissensions and to strengthen his position in the face of renewed Pāṇḍyan aggression. The son and successor of Śrī Māra was Varaguṇa-varman II who came to the throne in 862. For several years after his accession the Pāṇḍyan ruler appears to have recognised the suzerainty of Nṛipatuṅga proclaimed after his victory at Arichit. At any rate we find a record at Tiruvadi in South Arcot (Toṇḍaināḍ), dated in the eighteenth year of Nṛipatuṅga-varman (A.D. 873), mentioning a large gift of 570 *kaḷañju* of gold by the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa Mahārāja.[80] Soon after, the position changes. Possibly the trouble began in the first instance as a conflict between the Pāṇḍya and the Chola, and then resolved itself inevitably into a war between the Pāṇḍya and Pallava rulers. An inscription, in the neighbourhood of Dindigal, of the reign of Māṛañjaḍaiyan mentions an expedition against Iḍavai on the north bank of the Kāvérī in the Chola country led by the king in which he was accompanied by a chieftain named Parāntakapaḷḷi Velān.[81] That the Pāṇḍya invader sustained a defeat from the Chola Āditya at Iḍavai is rendered probable by the alternative name of the village which occurs in a Vijayanagar inscription dated Ś. 1369 (A.D. 1447).[82] In this inscription Iḍavai is called Pāṇḍiyani-ven-kaṇḍa-śóla-chaturvédi-maṅgalam, i.e. the Brahmin village established by the Chola who saw the back of the Pāṇḍya king. But this was not the end of the campaign, and it seems that the Chola victory did not by any means secure freedom from the danger of Pāṇḍyan aggression. The Pallava power had not only to join itself, but had to seek help from all its associates and allies, prominent among whom was the Gaṅga king Pṛithivīpati I, who is known to have been a feudatory of Nṛipatuṅga from an inscription at Āmbūr.[83] The Udayéndiram plates of Pṛithivīpati II[84] state that in the great battle of Śrīpuṛambiyam the heroic Pṛithivīpati attained heaven after making the name

79 *SII*, XII, No. 96.
80 360 of 1921 (*SII*, XII., No. 71).
81 690 of 1905.
82 42 of 1914.
83 *EI*, IV, 182.
84 *SII*, II, 384, v. 18.

of his friend Aparājita (unconquered) fully significant. Śrīpurambiyam is doubtless Tiruppurambiyam near Kumbakonam. So Aparājita took the field against the invader, and received substantial assistance from his Chola and Gaṅga feudatories. The invasion was averted, and the military victory was complete. But Prithivīpati lost his life on the field, and what is more, the rising ambition of the Chola Āditya was stimulated by his perception of the weakness of the Pallava power. The battle of Śrīpurambiyam was fought most probably about A.D. 880. some nine years after Āditya's accession to power. But after his part in the repulse of the Pāṇḍyan invasion, Āditya was no longer content with a position of subordination to the Pallavas, and began to entertain plans for resuscitating the ancient glory of the Chola power. Āditya is said to have made a gift in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam in his twenty-first regnal year (*c*. A.D. 891),[85] and his inscriptions begin to appear in the area from his twenty-third year. The campaigns of conquest might have lasted some years; the end is described in a verse in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates of Rājendra I (Chola)[86] which states that Āditya overthrew the strong Pallava ruler Aparājita and deprived him of his territory. More specifically, the Kanyākumārī inscription of Vīrarājendra[87] gives Āditya the title Kódaṇḍarāma, and mentions that in a battle he pounced upon the Pallava king who was seated on the back of a tall elephant and slew him. An undated Rājakeśari inscription from Tillaisthānam[88] in the Tanjore district states that it was issued by the king who spread the Chola power over Toṇḍaināḍ. That was the end of the Pallava kingdom.

It must be noted that there are still several unsolved problems of Pallava history. For instance, we hear of a king Chandrāditya who excavated a rock-cut Śiva temple called Śikhari Pallaveśvara at Siṁhapura (Śingavaram) in the Gingee taluk of S. Arcot; and the inscription which records the event is in characters not later than the time of Narasiṁha-varman I.[89] We cannot say if Chandrāditya was a title of one of the early Pallava kings who followed Siṁhavishnu or the name of a subordinate king of the locality. So also we have no knowledge of the exact positions of Vijaya Narasiṁha-varman, Vijaya Iśvara-varman, Vairamegha-varman, and others.[90] The Nolambas of Nolambavāḍi in Bellary and adjoining tract of Mysore claimed to be Pallavas by descent, as also several chieftains of a later time in the Telugu and Tamil areas of South India, most celebrated among whom was the Kāḍava Kópperuñjiṅga.

85 *SII*, III, No. 142.
86 *SII*, III, No. 205, v. 49.
87 *TAS*, III, v. 55.
88 286 of 1911.
89 *SII*, XII, No. 115.
90 Gopalan-*Pallavas*, App. pp. 210-12.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE PĀṆḌYAS

REFERENCE HAS BEEN MADE ABOVE to the foundation of the Pāṇḍya kingdom by Kaḍuṅgon. Of Kaḍuṅgon (c. A.D. 590-620) who fought against the Kaḷabhras about the same time as Siṁhavishṇu and resuscitated the Pāṇḍyan power, and of his son Māravarman Avaniśūḷāmaṇi (629-45), we have very little information from the Vēḷvikuḍi and Śinnamanūr charters which form the sheet-anchor of the Pāṇḍyan history of this period. Kaḍuṅgon is said to have destroyed the claims of others to the earth by the strength of his arms and established his own claim on a firm basis. The third ruler in the line, Śēñdan or Jayanta-varman (A.D. 645-70) is praised for his soldierly qualities as well as for the justice of his rule. He bears the title Vānavan, which implies a victory against his Chera contemporary. It is from the reign of Jayantavarman's successor, who was most probably his son, that our sources become more helpful and mention specific incidents which can be traced also in the literature of the age. This king is called Arikesari Māṟavarman in the Vēḷvikuḍi and smaller Śinnamanūr grants, and Arikesari Parāṅkuśa in the larger Śinnamanūr grant. His reign may be assigned roughly to the period 670-710. He was most probably the Kūn Pāṇḍya and Ninṟaśīr-neḍumāṟan of legend, the contemporary of Ñānsambandar who, at the instance of queen Maṅgaiyarkkaraśi (lit. queen among women), a Chola princess, and minister Kuḷachchirai, weaned the Pāṇḍya ruler from Jainism and converted him into an ardent devotee of Śiva. The disputations held by Ñānasaṁbandar with the Jains of Madurai, who were then in the ascendant, and the miracles he performed on the occasion, are narrated in great detail in the *Periya Purāṇam* of Śēkkiḷār. The Vēḷvikuḍi grant says that Arikeśarī defeated the Kerala in many battles, names Pāli, Nelvēli, and Śennilam as the scenes of battle, and couples the subjugation of the recalcitrant Paravas and the ravaging of Kuṟunāḍu with these campaigns against the Kerala. The Śinnamanūr grant says more briefly that Parāṅkuśa defeated the Villavar (Keralas) at Nelvēli. Now Kuṟunāḍu and Nelvēli occur in the Travancore inscriptions,[1] and the other battle-fields mentioned must be looked for in the same neighbourhood. The Paravar were the fishermen of the coastal country. Arikesari there-

1 *TAS*, III, 204 and IV and V index for Kuṟunāḍu, *contra PK*, pp. 51-53.

fore consolidated the strength of the rising kingdom by conquering the peoples and rulers of the small principalities in its neighbourhood, and preparing it for the greater part it was soon to play in South Indian politics. This policy of expansion would have brought him into conflict with the Pallavas in the north in any event, and it seems probable that it was hastened by Vikramāditya seeking Arikesari's cooperation in the pursuit of his own designs against Parameśvara-varman. The result of this alliance has been noted above.

Arikesari was succeeded by his son Kochchaḍaiyan, who had the title Raṇadhīra (calm in battle) and may be taken to have ruled for twenty-five years (710-35). He was a great soldier, as his title indicates, and waged aggressive wars against his neighbours. He assumed the titles Vānavan and Śembiyan (sometimes Śolan), which imply suzerainty over the Chera and Chola. He is also called Madura-Karunāṭakan, the sweet Karnāṭaka and Koṅgar-komān, lord of the Koṅgu people; these titles seem to be indicative of substantial military achievements which evidently resulted in the extension of the bounds of his kingdom. He is said to have attacked and subdued the Mahārathas in the great city of Maṅgalāpuram, most likely modern Mangalore. Here is an indication, with no details, that the Pāṇḍyan kingdom had begun to develop the contacts which began with Arikesari Parāṅkuśa's alliance with Vikramāditya I. We have to suppose that the hostilities with the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and their feudatories, the Gaṅgas, which are well attested for a somewhat later period, had already begun, and that as a result of his campaigns in this direction Kochchaḍaiyan made himself master of at least a part, if not the whole, of the Koṅgu country. The Chālukya ruler of the time was Vijayāditya. Kochchaḍaiyan had also to undertake some fighting in the southern hill country of his kingdom against the Āy chieftains of that region. A battle at Marudūr, perhaps in Kuṛunāḍ in South Travancore,[2] ended in victory to the Pāṇḍya and the return to his allegiance of the Āy chief. The son and successor of Kochchaḍaiyan Raṇadhīra was Māra-varman Rājasiṁha I (735-65). Rājasiṁha is called Pallava-bhañjana (the breaker of the Pallava) and the Vélvikuḍi grant says that he defeated Pallavamalla who fled from the field of battle. The Tamil portion of the same grant has an ornate passage ascribing to Rājasiṁha Pāṇḍya victories at Neḍuvayal, Kuṛumaḍai, Maṇṇaikurichi, Tirumaṅgai, Pūvaḷur, Koḍumbāḷūr, and another place of which the name has not been read, and stating that the Pallava king was deprived of his splendour at Kuḷumbūr where the Pāṇḍya captured numberless elephants and horses from his enemy's forces. This is

2. *TAS*, III, 198.

doubtless the Pāṇḍyan version of the war which resulted from Rājasiṁha espousing the cause of Chitramāya.

Rājasiṁha I gained little by his efforts to support Chitramāya against Pallavamalla, though it is possible that he gained successes in individual battles which justified his assuming the grandiose title 'the breaker of the Pallava'. But elsewhere he pursued with better success the aggressive policy he had inherited from his father. Proceeding against the Koṅgu country, he defeated his foes at Periyalūr, and crossed the Kāvērī to bring about the subjugation of Malakoṅgam, on the border between modern Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts. The Mālava chieftain had to surrender and give his daughter in marriage to the victor, who advanced thereafter to Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi, i.e. 'Koḍumuḍi which had become a Pāṇḍyan possession', 'where he worshipped the lotus feet of Paśupati and gave away with great pleasure heaps of gold and lustrous gems'. This was a direct threat to the Gaṅga kingdom. Its ruler, Śrīpurusha, unable to meet single-handed the onslaught of the powerful invader from the south, applied for assistance to his suzerain Chālukya Kīrtivarman II who had succeeded Vikramāditya II in 744-45. An important battle was fought at Veṇbai in which the Chālukya monarch and his Gaṅga feudatory sustained defeat, and the latter had to make his peace by offering the hand of his daughter in marriage to the Pāṇḍya prince Jaṭila Parāntaka, the son of Rājasiṁha.[3] This must have occurred about 750. We have no information of the events in the rest of Rājasiṁha's reign. He is said to have performed many *gosahasras, hiraṇyagarbhas*, and *tulābhāras*, and to have relieved the distress of Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas. He is also reported to have renovated Kūḍal, Vañji and Koli. If this is a reference to the capitals of the Pāṇḍyas, Cheras, and Cholas, the power of Rājasiṁha must have been very great indeed. He was succeeded by his son Jaṭila Parāntaka about A.D. 765. Jaṭila had also the name Varaguṇa and the titles Mārañjaḍaiyan and Neḍuñjaḍaiyan. His inscriptions range from the third regnal year to the forty-third, and he may be taken to have reigned for about fifty years. Very early in his reign he won a victory against Nandi-varman Pallavamalla in a fight at Peṇṇāgaḍam, somewhere near Tanjore, on the south bank of the Kāvērī; no details of the engagement are forthcoming, and it might have been no more than a border skirmish. In the third year of his reign he issued the Vēḷvikuḍi grant to which we owe practically all that we know of his predecessors and their achievements. Its *ājñapti* was Māraṇ Kāri of the Vaidyakula (family of scholars) of

3 Vēḷvikuḍi grant, ll, 126-34. Also *India Antiqua*, 254-56.

Karavandapura (Ukkirankkoṭṭai), 18 miles north of Tinnevelly,[4] who must have held an important post under the king, if he was not already *uttaramantrī* (chief minister). He had taken part in the battle of Veṇbai and in arranging the marriage of the king with the daughter of Śripurusha soon after that battle. He was also known as Madhurakavi, and built a stone temple for Vishṇu in the Ānamalai hill, formerly a Jain centre six miles to the east of Madurai, and made a gift of a rich *agrahāra* in the neighbourhood to Brahmaṇas on the occasion when the image of Narasiṁha was installed in the temple. This was in 770, and Madhurakavi died soon after. His identity with the Vaishṇava *āḻvār* Madhurakavi has been suggested, but cannot be taken as established. His brother was Mūrti Eyinan, who also became *uttaramantrī* of Jaṭila Parāntaka, and made further additions to the temple of Vishṇu, and thus completed the work of Madhurakavi. Other members of the family also occupied important positions in the king's government, two of them being called *mahāsāmanta* in the sixth and seventeenth years of the reign.

Jaṭila was called upon to fight the same foes as his father in the north-west, and apparently with better results. Battles are mentioned at Vellūr, Viṇṇam, and Śeliyakkuḍi against unnamed foes. He put to flight Adigan of the bright lance in two battles at Āyiraveli Ayirūr and Pugaḻiyūr (Pugalūr in Karur *taluk*) on the north bank of the Kāverī, and captured his chariot together with several of his war horses. In this war Adigan was aided by Pallava and Kerala forces, which advanced from the east and the west only to be repulsed with great loss by the opposing Pāṇḍyan armies. As a result of these campaigns, Jaṭila captured the king of West Koṅgu with his elephants and put him into confinement within the walls of Madurai, and the whole of the Koṅgu country became a part of the Pāṇḍyan empire. Adigan was doubtless a member of the well-known line, the Adigaimāns of Tagaḍūr (Dharmapurī in Salem district) and he fought on the banks of the Kāverī against the Pāṇḍya because he was either the feudatory or the ally of the king of West Koṅgu. The appearance of the Kerala and Pallava forces may be explained as the result of a combined effort of the other powers of South India to set a limit to the growing aggression of the Pāṇḍyas. The coalition, however, failed on this occasion. The extension of Pāṇḍya sovereignty to Koṅgu was of sufficiently long duration to allow Jaṭila undertaking the construction

4 *ASIAR*, 1935-36, p. 102. 'Vaidya' means a physician, not a scholar, and also designates a well-known caste in Bengal whose members were physicians, and ranked only next to the Brāhmaṇas. The use of this term as a class or caste, demanded by the word *kula*, at such, an early date is of great historical importance.

of a temple of considerable size (*kunṛam-annador koyil*, lit. a mountain-like temple) for Vishṇu in Kāñjivāyppérūr in that country, and earning for himself the title *parama-Vaishṇava.* But he was equally ready to endow the temples of Śiva as his Trichinopoly and Ambāsamudram inscriptions show.[5] A record of his thirteenth year (778) at Tiruchchendūr mentions a considerable endowment for the regular worship in the temple of Kumāra all the year round. Another, dated many years later (804), records a gift to the Śiva temple on the banks of the Tāmraparṇī at Ambāsamudram.

Jaṭila also conquered Vénāḍ in south Travancore after attacking and destroying the strong fortifications of the port of Viḷiñam. This port was a flourishing emporium and seems often to have roused the cupidity of the invaders of Travancore; evidently it recovered rapidly after each disaster, for we find it the target of Chola attacks three centuries after the days of Jaṭila, whose first conquest of Vénāḍ must have occurred before A.D. 782, the date of his Madras Musum plates which mention the event. Veṇāḍ does not appear to have reconciled itself to Pāṇḍyan rule easily, for Jaṭila was still fighting in the neighbourhood of Viḷiñam more than ten years after his first invasion.[6] Part of this war in Vénāḍ was the campaign against Śaḍaiyan Karunandan of the Malaināḍ (hill country between the Tinnevelly district and Travancore)[7]. He belonged to the Āy family which apparently owed a fitful allegiance to the Pāṇḍyas; Jaṭila's expedition against him about 788 in which Ariviyūrkkoṭṭai (the fortress of Ariviyūr) is said to have been destroyed, may have been of the nature of reprisal against his having sided the king of Vénāḍ in his struggle for independence against the Pāṇḍya power. No wars are recorded during the rest of the long reign of Jaṭika Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan (Varaguṇa I) whose sway extended far beyond Trichinopoly into the Tanjore, Salem and Coimbatore districts besides the Pāṇḍya country proper and into Vénāḍ.

Jaṭila Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan was succeeded by his son Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha who ruled from A.D. 815 to 862. He had the titles Ekavīra, Parachakrakolāhala, and Avanipaśekhara.[8] He was an ambitious ruler who, not content with maintaining the considerable empire handed to him by his father, sought to extend it further by adding Ceylon to it. The Sanskrit part of the Śinnamanūr plates[9] says that this king brought the whole world (of S. India ?) under the protection

5 414 of 1940; 105 of 1905; 155 of 1903; 104 of 1905.
6 277 of 1895.
7 43 of 1908; *TAS*, I, 3-5.
8 *ARE*, 1930, II, paras 2-4.
9 *SII*, III, Pt. IV, No. 206.

of his umbrella, and became well beloved of his subjects after defeating in battle such different foes as the Māyā-Pāṇḍya, the Kerala, the king of Siṁhala, the Pallava, and the Vallabha. The Tamil portion repeats this and adds that the king won victories at Kuṇṇūr and Viliñam as well as in Ceylon, and that he repulsed with great loss a confederation of Gaṅgas, Pallavas, Cholas, Kaliṅgas, Māgadhas and others who offered battle at Kumbakonam. It was as a result of this victory that the king assumed the high-sounding title Parachakrakolāhala (Confounder of the circle of his enemies). The battles of Kuṇṇūr and Viliñam and the war with the Kerala receive no elucidation from any other source. We can only suppose that South Travancore never fully reconciled itself to the Pāṇḍyan yoke and that trouble from that quarter was chronic. The victories claimed for Srī Māra against the Pallavas and their confederates including the Vallabha (Rāshṭrakūṭa in this period). have been sufficiently elucidated by our account of the Pallava-Pāṇḍya relations in the reigns of Nandi-varman III and Nṛipatuṅga. We must add that there is every reason to believe that among the confederates of the Pallavas must be counted the rulers of Ceylon, who had now greater reason, on account of Pāṇḍya aggression in Ceylon, to strengthen their traditional bonds with the Pallavas. Thus Śrī Māra's relations with Ceylon were not altogether independent of those with the northern powers.

The *Chūlavaṁsa*[10] states that in the reign of Sena I (A.D. 831-51) the Pāṇḍya king came with a great force and began to take possession of the island. Discord among the high dignitaries of the Sinhalese army favoured the invader, who laid waste the whole of Uttaradeśa (the North Province) and occupied an armed camp in Mahatalitagāma. The Tamils, who had already settled in the island, gathered under his flag and strengthened his forces. The Ceylonese forces were dispersed easily in the battle that followed, and the capital was sacked. Sena made terms, and the Pāṇḍyan quitted the island. In the next reign,[11] that of Sena II (851-85), a disgruntled son of the Pāṇḍyan king came to Ceylon and appealed to the Sinhalese monarch for help against his father. Sena 'rejoiced greatly', and a Sinhalese invasion of the Madurai kingdom followed. The country that lay on the route of the invading forces was laid waste, and the capital city of Madurai was invested and taken in the absence of its ruler. The Pāṇḍya, who came to redeem the capital, was wounded in fight, 'left the town to its fate, took flight, and lost his life at the place whither he had betaken himself. His consort, who had come with him, also met her death'. The Ceylonese general recovered all the

10 Ch. 50, vv, 12-42.
11 Ch. 51, vv, 27-51.

images and treasure that had been brought away from Ceylon some years before, and seized much wealth besides. He then consecrated the son of the Pāṇḍya, placed the administration into his hands, and made his way back to Ceylon 'at his pleasure'. An inscription in Ceylon places this invasion in the ninth year of Sena II (860), and calls his son Kassapa V, the 'son of the great king who won the fame of victory by conquering the Pāṇḍya country'.[12] The Pāṇḍyan version of the story stops with the simple mention of a victory in Ceylon, and omits all reference to the counter-invasion. To all appearance, Śrī Māra's defeat at Arichit by Nṛipatuṅga, and the Ceylonese invasion of the Pāṇḍya country brought about by a timely appeal from a Pāṇḍyan prince to Sena II, are closely connected and Śrī Māra seems to have come back from his defeat at Arichit to see his capital in the hands of another enemy and perished in the attempt to recover his position.

The *Chūlavaṁsa* states distinctly that the son of the Pāṇḍya who appealed to Sena II was placed on the Pāṇḍyan throne after his father's death, and this could have been no other than Varaguṇa-varman II. But whether he was also the Māyā-Pāṇḍya (Pāṇḍya pretender) against whom Śrī Māra is said to have won a success cannot be decided; most probably he was not. Again, whether Varaguṇa-varman's differences with his father were fomented by the Pallavas and Sena II, or the latter only took advantage of dissensions that had broken out in the Pāṇḍyan royal family, must also remain uncertain. But the feudatory relation in which Varaguṇa-varman stood to Nṛipatuṅga for several years after his accession leaves little room for doubt that the Pallava and the Ceylonese ruler were acting together, and that Varaguṇa-varman's acknowledgment of Pallava suzerainty was a condition of the Pāṇḍyan throne being secured to him. Varaguṇa's attempt to assert independence led, as has been narrated, to the battle of Śrī Puraṁbiyam, in which he himself sustained a defeat and the Chola Āditya I discovered the weakness of the suzerain power.

Varaguṇa II did not long survive the defeat of Śrī Puraṁbiyam. Perhaps he had no son to succeed him, and the next ruler was his younger brother Śrī Parāntaka Vīranārāyaṇa Sadaiyan (880-900). The Sanskrit section of the Sinnamanūr plates states that he captured single-handed the haughty Ugra near Kharagiri together with his elephants, that he endowed many *agrahāras* and numberless *devasthānas* and tanks, and that he had for his queen Śrīvanavan Mahādevī, evidently a Keralā princess. The Tamil part generally confirms these statements and says further that he destroyed Peṇṇāgaḍam and fought

12 *ASC*. Report 1896 p 15. Elleveva Inscription. *EZ*, II. 39, 44. *cr*, 1, 4, 149 *n*.

in the Koṅgu country. The war with Ugra has not been satisfactorily explained. The destruction of Peṇṇāgaḍam and fight in the Koṅgu country indicate a conflict with the Chola Āditya I who was rapidly building up his power at the expense of the Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas. The Chola claims to have conquered the Koṅgu country, and the Pāṇḍya record tacitly admits the validity of the claim by mentioning only a fight in Koṅgu without claiming victory. Parāntaka Vīra-nārāyaṇa was succeeded by his son (by Vanavan Mahādevī), the donor of the larger Sinnamaṇūr grant to which we owe practically all we know of the successors of Jaṭila Parāntaka Varaguṇa I. He was called Māra-varman Rājasiṁha II and his rule may be taken to cover the first twenty years of the tenth century. He had the titles Vikaṭapāṭava, Śrīkānta, Rājaśikhāmaṇi, and Mandara-gaurava. He is said to have fought against unnamed foes at Ulappilimaṅgalam, opposed the king of Tanjore, gained a victory at Koḍumbālur, and carried destruction to Vañji, the Chera capital in the Koṅgu country. It is quite probable that Rājasiṁha came into conflict with Āditya I, and that the battles mentioned, including the reference to Vañji, are all the incidents of the Chola war. But the Chola power steadily gained in strength, and we find Āditya's son Parāntaka I claiming the title Madhurāntaka or Maduraikoṇḍa (captor of Madurai) as early as the third year in his reign (A.D. 910). The Pāṇḍya turned to Ceylon for help against the Chola and the combined forces of the Pāṇḍyas and the Siṅhalese suffered a defeat at the battle of Veḷḷūr near Madurai (c. 920). Rājasiṁha had to abandon his capital and kingdom and flee to Ceylon. Though the king of Ceylon, Dappula IV (923--24),[13] was willing to give him assistance for the recovery of his kingdom. 'the nobles dwelling on the island for some reason or other stirred up a sorry strife to the undoing of the Pāṇḍu king. 'The Pāṇḍu king', says the *Chūlavaṁsa*,[14] 'thought his sojourn here was of no use to him. He left his diadem and other valuables behind and betook himself to the Keralas'. Thus disappeared from history the first empire of the Pāṇḍyas and its last ruler Rājasiṁha II. Though Kerala was the home of his mother, the Chola hold on that country had become so strong that Rājasiṁha relied more on Ceylon in the first instance than on Kerala. When his political plans failed him utterly owing to the reluctance of the Ceylonese generals to shed their blood in his cause, he went to Kerala, perhaps with a view to spend the rest of his days in obscurity among the relatives of his mother.

13 This king is really Dappula III. The dates of the two kings Sena I and Sena II given above on p. 348 are two years too early, *cf. History of Ceylon* published by the University of Ceylon (1959, 1960), Vol. I, part II (pp. 845-46). (Editor).

14 Ch. 53, vv, 5 ff.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE GANGAS, KADAMBAS, BĀṆAS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY DYNASTIES

I. THE GAṄGAS

THE DYNASTIC NAME OF Gaṅgas was borne by two distinct royal families, one ruling in Gaṅgavāḍi (East Mysore country) from about A.D. 400 and the other in Kaliṅga from A.D. 500 or a little later. The Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga claim kinship with those of Mysore, though in fact the origin of both the lines is involved in much obscurity. Late and contradictory legends dating from the eleventh century are of little value to history, and we need not linger over the details of the Mysore legends which trace the line to an Ikshvāku origin, speak of the migration of its founders from Ujjain, their arrival at Gaṅga Pérūr in Cuddapah district, their encounter with the Jaina ascetic Siṁhanandi, and their final settlement at Kuvalālapura (Kolār); or the legends of Kaliṅga tracing descent ultimately from the kings of the lunar line named Yayāti and Turvasu, and more proximately from the Gaṅgas of Kolār. It is also uncertain whether the two lines of kings had any connection with the Gangaridae of the Greek writers who seem to have used the term to describe the people of the lower Ganges and not to a ruling dynasty, though Pliny the Elder seems to connect a branch of the tribe with Kaliṅga. All legends agree in interposing Gaṅga somewhere in the genealogy in its mythical part. The Gaṅga crest was the elephant.

Early Gaṅga history has suffered much from the existence of many obviously spurious copper-plate grants with unusually early Śaka dates, ranging from 169 to 388, which has cast a suspicion on the other records also, and it is possible that even some genuine records were thrown overboard by critical students of Gaṅga history like Fleet. An undoubtedly early and genuine record, the Penugonda plates of Mādhava-varman, was discovered in 1915, as Fleet himself acknowledged. Since then the whole position has been reconsidered and fresh copper-plates have gained admission into the rank of authentic records of early Gaṅga history. There is, however, still room for differences on the genealogy of the early Gaṅgas, and the following account of the Gaṅgas of Mysore, the Western Gaṅgas as they are sometimes called, is based, for the early period, only on

these records which contain no legendary matter whatever, not even the fairly early legend of the founder of the line cutting a stone pillar into two by a lusty blow of his sword. The chronology, which is tentative, rests on the palaeography of the genuine records corroborated by general probabilities of history.[1] All the early inscriptions of the line are in the Sanskrit language.

Koṅkaṇivarma (*c.* A.D. 400-25), the first ruler of the *Jāhnaveya Kula,* is said to have belonged to the Kāṇvāyana *gotra,* to have been adorned by wounds received in the suppression of fierce enemies, and to have created a kingdom inhabited by a noble population (*sujana janapada*) by the victorious progress of his arms. He is also called Dharmamahādhirāja, possibly an index of his independent status.[2] Late and doubtful records mention his initiation into the Jaina doctrine (*Syādvāda*) by Simhanandi at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* in Śravaṇa Belgola;[3] but this is in direct contradiction to the invocation to Vishṇu with which the early records of a genuine character begin. The Udayéndiram plates of Pṛithivīpati II say that Koṅkaṇi was anointed for the conquest of the Bāṇamaṇḍala,[4] and other records describe him as 'a wild fire to the Bāṇa stubble'.[5] But the statements are vague; we do not hear for instance who anointed Koṅkaṇi for the conquest of the Bāṇamaṇḍala; and though we hear of Kadamba Mayūraśarman levying tribute from the Bṛihad Bāṇas about the middle of the fourth century, and the Gaṅgas and Bāṇas are often found fighting one another in later times, the silence of the early records on such an important event may justify the suspicion that we have here an instance of the early history of the dynasty being revised in the light of later events. It must be admitted, however, that from early times both these lines of rulers lay claim to lordship of the Nandi hills (*Nandagirināthа*) and of the area round about Kolār (Kuvalālapura). The *Koṅgudéśa Rājākkaḷ,* a compilation of the early nineteenth century made in response to Col. Mackenzie's demand for historical literature, seeks to explain the name Koṅkaṇi by attributing to him rule over the Koṅgu country, a mere guess, no more entitled to credence than the more modern surmise of Jayaswal that the king got the name 'for having come recently from Koṅkaṇa'.[6]

The capital of the early kingdom is nowhere named in the contemporary inscriptions. Later tradition current among the Gaṅgas of Mysore and of Kaliṅga locates it first at Kuvalāla (Kolār), and later

1 Fleet in *JRAS,* 1915, pp. 471-85.
2 Śāsanakōta, *EI.* XXIV, 234, Penugonda, *EI.* XIV, 332.
3 *EC,* II, 67 which gives the esoteric meaning of the miracle of the stone pillar.
4 *SII.* II, 383, v. 14.
5 *EC,* IX, Db. 67 (Mallohalli)
6 *History of India* A.D. 150-350, p. 198.

at Talakāḍ, on the Kāverī, nearer the hostile frontier of the Kadambas against whom they waged war under their suzerains, the Pallavas.

The genealogy of the early Gaṅgas is quite definite in the early and genuine records, though some scholars hesitate, rather unaccountably, to follow this clear line.[7] The view that a branch of the Gaṅgas ruled at Parigi in the Anantapur district has no more support for it than the location in Paṛu *Vishaya* of the properties granted in the Sāsanakoṭa and Penugoṇḍa plates.

Koṅkaṇi was succeeded by his son Mādhava I (A.D. 425-50) who issued the Sāsanakoṭa plates in the first year of his reign and the Kandasala grant in the ninth.[8] He is said to have inherited the great qualities of his father, and possessed a well cultivated mind proficient in all *śāstras,* particularly *nītiśāstra* (politics). The righteous rule over his subjects was, we learn, the sole aim of his having taken charge of the kingdom. He was a great patron of learning and poetry. Later tradition attributes to him a *vṛitti* (gloss) on *Dattakasūtra* by which may be meant either the work on erotics which, according to Vātsyāyana, Dattaka composed at the request of the hetaerae of Pāṭaliputra, or possibly a *sūtra* on adoption. Mādhava I was followed on the throne by his son Ārya-varman (*c.* 450-70), a great warrior and scholar, who was anointed duly[9] by the Pallava king Siṁha-varman, most probably the first ruler of that name who ruled at Kāñchī. The occasion for Pallava intervention can only be guessed as it is nowhere stated clearly. We find another son of Mādhava I by name (Vijaya) Kṛishṇa-varman issuing two grants in his first and second regnal years,[10] and it seems probable that a dispute between the two brothers was settled by the Pallava monarch. Another possibility is that the relations between the Gaṅgas and Kadambas became strained, and in order to secure the support of the Pallavas, Ārya-varman entered into a subordinate alliance with them. Later grants of the line which call him Hari-varman and state that he removed the Gaṅga capital to Talakāḍ lend some support to the second hypothesis. In any case, both Ārya-varman and his brother Krishṇa-varman were allied to the Pallava Siṁha-varman, and named their sons after him. Siṁha-varman, the son of Kṛishṇa-varman, is known from the Chukuttūr grant[11] in which he calls himself *mahādhirāja* and makes a grant of land on his birth-day as a memorial gift after the death of Yuvarāja Vīra-varman, his younger brother and an unparalleled warrior.

7 See, e.g., *MAR*, 1930, notes to No. 3.

8 *MAR*, 1925, No. 115.

9 *Vidhinā* in Kudlur, *MAR*, 1930, No. 88, L, 5, and *yathārhaṁ* in Penugoṇḍa pl.

10 *MAR*, 1915, p. 40 Bendigānhalli; 1932, p. 124 Kuḍithiyam.

11 *MAR*, 1924, p. 79.

According to the genuine records Ārya-varman was followed by his son Mādhava II *alias* Siṁha-varman. Later records introduce at this point a certain Vishṇugopa as the son of Harivarman, and make Mādhava the son of Vishṇugopa. Rice, while editing the Penugoṇḍa plates thought that Vishṇugopa was omitted in that record by mistake; but the discovery of the Kūḍlūr grant which confirms the Penugoṇḍa genealogy shows that the mistake is on the side of the later records which introduce Vishṇugopa, another Pallava name, into the early Gaṅga genealogy. The correct view of early Gaṅga history therefore seems to be that after Mādhava I, the line divided into two for a time and sought the alliance of the Pallavas, both events probably due to one and the same reason—fear of the Kadambas. Ārya-varman ruled from Talakāḍ, and Kṛishṇa-varman from Kolār. The same arrangement continued under their sons Mādhava II and Siṁha-varman. Madhava II was crowned by the Pallava Skanda-varman as we learn from the Penugoṇḍa and Kūḍlūr records. But some time later, there came about two important changes. Siṁha-varman of Kolār apparently died soon after his younger brother Yuvarāja Vīra-varman without an heir, and the Gaṅga kingdom became united again under Mādhava II, called Taḍaṅgāla Mādhava in later records. Secondly, the tension between the Kadambas and Gaṅgas ceased as a result of the policy of dynastic alliances pursued by Kadamba Kākustha-varman who brought joy into many royal households including that of the Guptas by bestowing his daughters on them. One of these princesses, a sister of Kṛishṇa-varman I, was married to Mādhava II, and the child of this union was Avinīta who was anointed as king in his mother's lap (c. A.D. 520.) The alliance between the Gaṅgas and Kadambas meant perhaps the termination of the Pallava overlordship over the Gaṅgas; but Pallava history becomes very obscure about this time. Avinīta (undisciplined) is a curious name and is explained in a record of Śrīpurusha's reign as 'Avinīta only in respect of the hosts of ill-behaved kings'.[12] He had a long reign but no events of any importance, either during his minority or later, are recorded. His chief queen was a princess of Punnāṭa, Jyeshṭhā by name, daughter of one Skanda-varman. The Hosakote plates purport to record a gift to a Jaina temple set up by the mother of Siṁhavishṇu in the twelfth year of Avinīta's reign,[13] but it is not free from suspicion and might well be a modern fake calculated to support the evidence of the *Avanti-Sundarī-Kathāsāra* on the contemporaneity of Vishṇuvardhana, Durvinīta, and Siṁhavishṇu which has been received with great reserve by critical scholars. In view of the legend that Avinīta was proclaimed by a

12 *MAR*, 1920, p. 23 Narasiṁharājapura.
13 *MAR*, 1938, pp. 80-84.

heavenly voice to be a *śatajīvī*,[14] a declaration which he proved by successfully crossing the Kāverī in full flood, we may take it that his reign lasted till A.D. 605 when he was succeeded by his son Durvinīta (ill-behaved), a name even more curious than that of his father and explained in a similar way by the late inscription already noted. His real name was Mādhava-varman, and he had a dispute with an unnamed half-brother who had been appointed to the throne by his father. In a civil war marked by several battles at Andari, Ālattūr and other places he came out victorious and celebrated the victory by the performance of *hiranyagarbha*.[15] Durvinīta had to make his peace with the rising power of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi. The Aihoḷe inscription of Pulakeśin II only says that the Gaṅga and the Ālupa were constant attendants of Pulakeśin II; but a later Gaṅga inscription gives more details of Durvinīta's relations with the Chālukyas. It says that having captured the Kāḍuveṭṭi who was disturbing the peace of the world like Rāvaṇa, Durvinīta established his own daughter's son in the hereditary kingdom of Jayasiṁhavallabha, and thus became formidable in the world. This is obviously a reference to the recovery of the Bādāmi throne by Vikramāditya I, the son of Pulakeśin II, after the confusion caused by the invasion of the Bādāmi kingdom by Pallava Narasiṁha I. We thus see that Durvinīta gave one of his daughters in marriage to Pulakeśin II, and after his tragic death (A.D. 642) in the siege of Bādāmi, Durvinīta supported his grandson Vikramāditya in the task of clearing the kingdom of the Pallava invaders and restoring its unity (A.D. 655). This was one of the last acts of Durvinīta.[17] Earlier he had succeeded to the Punnāta kingdom whence his mother came, and he took the title 'lord of Punnāta' some time before his twentieth regnal year; this must have been due to the failure of succession in Skanda-varman's line. In the *Kavirājamārga* of Nṛipatuṅga (Amoghavarsha) Durvinīta is mentioned as a great prose writer in Kannaḍa, and tradition credits him also with the authorship of a Sanskrit version of the *Bṛihatkathā*, a commentary on the fifteenth canto of Bhāravi's *Kirātārjunīya*, and a *Śabdāvatāra*.

The reigns of Mushkara (Mokkara) and Śrīvikrama were uneventful. The son of Śrīvikrama, by name Bhūvikrama, ruled from 665-79 and assisted the Chālukya Vikramāditya I in his war against the Pallava Parameśvara-varman I. Parameśvara's attempt to arrest the invasion, which advanced by way of the Gaṅga country, failed, and at the battle of Viḷande in the Tumkur district, Bhūvikrama seized from the Pallava a precious necklace containing a famous gem called 'Ugro-

14 *EC*, VIII, No. 35; VII, Sh. 4 & 64.
15 *MAR*, 1924 Nallala gr., and 1942 Pennaūr gr.
16 *EC*, VIII Nagar, 35.
17 *Triveni*, I, 112-20.

daya'.[18] Bhūvikrama was succeeded by his younger brother Śivamāra I (679-725)[19] whose reign was evidently peaceful.

He was followed on the throne by his grandson Śrīpurusha, as his son Ereganga seems to have predeceased him. Śrīpurusha was one of the ablest monarchs of the line and enjoyed a long reign of well over fifty years.[20] He had princes of Bāṇa origin serving as his feudatories in Kalbapunāḍu 1700 near Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷā.[21] Śrīpurusha cooperated with his Chālukya suzerains in their wars against the Pallavas. An inscription from Uḷchala in the Kurnool district (A.D. 730-31) states that *yuvarāja* Vikramāditya II levied tribute from the Pallava king Parameśvara-varman II after conquering Kāñchī, and on his way back made a gift of two villages to Durvinīta-Ereyappa of the Koṅguni family.[22] The prince last named was doubtless the same as Duggamāra or Ereyappa, a son of Śrīpurusha, and the gift recorded was clearly a reward earned by the Gaṅgas for their share in the conquest of Kāñchī. Parameśvara-varman must have invaded Gaṅgavāḍi soon after the Gaṅga and Chālukya forces withdrew from Kāñchī and met his fate on the historic field of Viḷande where Śrīpurusha is said to have killed the Kāḍuveṭṭi of Kāñchī and seized the royal umbrella of the enemy together with the title of Perumānaḍi.[23] The death of Parameśvara-varman was a serious disaster. He left no successor behind and there ensued the search for a king on the part of the officials and nobles of the Pallava kingdom and the installation of Nandi-varman II Pallavamalla (A.D. 732). Some years later, about 740, came the famous expedition of Vikramāditya II against Kāñchī; the cooperation of Śrīpurusha in this expedition also seems to be attested by two undated and fragmentary stone inscriptions from Mysore.[24] When Nandi-varman II had surmounted his troubles and stabilized his position, he remembered the hostile act of Śrīpurusha and invaded Gaṅgavāḍi. The Pallava was aided on this occasion by his Bāṇa feudatory Jayanandi-varman. The date of the expedition is indicated by a *vīrakal* (hero-stone) inscription dated in the fifty-second year of Nandi-varman's reign (A.D. 784).[25] We learn from the Tāndantoṭṭam plates of Nandi-varman dated six years later that he defeated the Gaṅga king and compelled him to surrender the necklace containing the gem *ugrodaya* which had been seized by Bhūvikrama from

18 *IA*, XIV, 229; *MAR*, 1924 No. 80; 1925, No. 105, 1927, No. 118.
19 *EC*, III, Md. 113
20 *EC*, IV, Ng. 85.
21 *MAR*, 1927, No. 118.
22 *Ancient India*, No. 5, p. 54.
23 *Ed.* VIII Nagar 35 (A.D. 1077), pp. 251 (text) and 135 (trn.).
24 *MAR*, 1939, No. 23; 1941, No. 45.
25 *EI*, XXII, 113.

Parameśvara-varman I at Viḷande.[26] We may infer from the Bāṇa records of the time that Śrīpurusha had to surrender some of his territory to the Pallava conqueror who handed it over to his Bāṇa adjutant Jayanandi-varman.

Earlier, Śrīpurusha attempted to curb the aggression of Pāṇḍya Rājasiṁha I in the Koṅgu country and sought the aid of Chālukya Kīrti-varman II in the task. But the allies sustained a defeat in the battle of Veṇbai (*c.* 750) and Śrīpurusha had to make his peace with the Pāṇḍya king by offering the hand of his daughter to the son of Rājasiṁha.[27] Some years later Śrīpurusha had to face an invasion by the newly established rulers of the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty who, having displaced the Chālukyas, naturally sought to assert their supremacy over all the territory that had obeyed the Chālukyas. Kṛishṇa I invaded Gaṅgavāḍi from the north, and the resistance offered by Sīyagalla, the son of Śrīpurusha, could not prevent Kṛishṇa from occupying Maṇṇe-nagara in the heart of the Gaṅga territory.[28] The Gaṅga had to submit and, according to contemporary practice, was left in charge of his kingdom on acknowledging the suzerainty of the invader. Two records, bearing Saka dates 710 and 720 (A.D. 788 and 798), apparently refer themselves to the reign of Śrīpurusha;[29] but as Śrīpurusha's records are generally dated in his regnal years, as the last inscription so dated mentions only his fiftieth year, and the evidence of the records of his successors leaves no room for any doubt that Śrīpurusha's reign came to an end soon after 775 and certainly before 780, we have to ignore the two inscriptions with the Saka dates whatever their true explanation may be.

Śrīpurusha's reign witnessed great changes in the neighbouring kingdoms. The failure of heirs in the direct line of Siṁhavishṇu led to a period of uncertainty and confusion in the Pallava kingdom which was ended by the choice of a young prince from a collateral line, Nandi-varman II Pallavamalla, to the throne (*c.* A.D. 732). In the north there came some time later the political revolution by which the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dantidurga overthrew the Chālukya Kīrti-varman II and established his own dynasty in power (A.D. 754).[29a] Śrīpurusha was not slow to take advantage of these opportunities and extend his rule over Koṅgu in the south and the Sinda country in the north which we find mentioned in some of his records. Though he had to

26 *SII*, II, 557.

27 *India Antiqua*, 254-56.

28 *MAR*, 1910 (Hiragundagal inscription), and *EC*, XII, Mi. 99; Telagaon plates of Kṛishṇa I—*EI*, XIII, 275-82.

29 *MAR*, 1918, p. 42 (Halkur); 1933 (Basavatti)

29a This date is a disputed point. V. V. Mirashi pushes back the date to 715 (*POC*, XV) while Nilakanta Sastri puts it as 752 or 753 (*History of South India*, p. 150) (Editor).

acknowledge the suzerainty of the Pallavas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas when they invaded his territory, we find that he was the first Gaṅga monarch to assume imperial titles, his full style being: Koṅgaṇivarma Dharma Mahārājadhirāja Parameśvara Śripurusha Mahārāja.[30] In the records of the reign Śrīpurusha is credited with the authorship of a treatise on elephant lore (*gajaśāstra*).

After a war of succession between Śivamāra II and Duggamāra Eṛeyappa, two sons of Śrīpurusha, the former was crowned (A.D. 778) king by Govinda II and Pallavamalla. But very soon he incurred the hostility of Dhruva for his part in supporting Govinda II in a war against Dhruva, and this resulted in a long period of captivity for him in a Rāshṭrakūṭa prison. During this period another brother of Śivamāra, by name Vijayāditya, administered the country loyally for his brother like Bharata ruling Ayodhyā during the exile of Rāma,[31] but a Rāshṭrakūṭa viceroy was imposed over him; this was Kaṁbha Raṇāvaloka, the eldest son of Dhruva. Śivamāra was released from prison by Govinda III when he succeeded Dhruva as emperor, but Śivamāra made common cause with Kaṁbha who rebelled against the new emperor (A.D. 793-94). The victorious Govinda consigned Śivamāra once more to prison, though Kaṁbha was restored to his viceroyalty of Gaṅga country. Set free once more by Amogavarsha I soon after his accession (A.D. 813), Śivamāra accepted the position of a feudatory under the Rāshṭrakūṭa and fought the wars of his suzerain against the Eastern Chālukya Vijayāditya II Narendra Mṛigarāja. Śivamāra was succeeded in 817 by his brother Vijayāditya's son Rājamalla I, his own elder son Mārasiṁha having predeceased him. Śivamāra was celebrated as a scholar and *yogi* by his contemporaries; he was a patron of poets and scholars.

The younger son of Śivamāra known as Pṛithivīpati I got some part of the country in the south including Koṅgu with Talakāḍ as capital to rule as separate charge, and he became the founder of a collateral line which acknowledged Pallava supremacy at first and then passed under the Cholas, while the main Gaṅga kingdom continued under Rājamalla and his successors in subordinate alliance with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. But Rājamalla I himself (817-35) and his son Nītimārga began with wars against Amoghavarsha I, an untried boy at the time of his accession to the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne. Pṛithivīpati I appears to have made common cause with Nītimārga (A.D. 837-70) as the Udayéndiram grant of his grandson states that he gave protection to Iriga against the anger of Amoghavarsha;[32] this incident was doubtless connected with the campaigns of the Rāshṭrakūṭa general

30 *EC*, IV, Hg. 4. 31 *EC*, IV, Yd. 60; XII, Nj. 269.
32 *SII*, II, 383, v. 16.

Baṅkeśa in the Gaṅga country (Chapter XVI). It seems probable that Baṅkeśa first encountered Nītimārga in his capital Maṇṇenagara and then proceeded against Pṛithivīpati in his capital Talakāḍ. To this campaign also belongs the battle of Vaiṁbalguḷi,[33] in which Pṛithivīpati displayed his heroism by wielding his sword with great effect and cutting off a piece of bone from his own body and throwing it into the river. As a feudatory of the Pallavas, Pṛithivīpati took part in Aparājita's war against the Pāṇḍya king Varaguṇa II and fought and fell in the battle of Śrī Puṟambiyam (A.D. 880) after securing the victory for his suzerain.[34] A daughter of Pṛithivīpati I, by name Kundavai, became the queen of Bāṇa Vidyādhara Vikramāditya I Jayameru, also a Pallava feudatory.[35] Pṛithivīpati's son Mārasiṁha seems to have predeceased his father, leaving his son Pṛithivīpati II (880-940) to become king after his grandfather. The early years of his reign witnessed the downfall of Pallava power before the onslaught of Chola Āditya I and the consequent transfer of his allegiance to the Chola conqueror. Soon after the accession of Parāntaka I to the Chola throne (A.D. 907), the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II invaded the Chola dominions with the aid of the Bāṇas and Vaiduṁbas, as he wished to support the claims of his grandson Kannaradeva, a half-brother of Parāntaka, to the Chola throne; in the battle of Vallāla (Tiruvallam) in the Bāṇa country (N. Arcot) that followed (A.D. 911-12) Pṛithivīpati II greatly distinguished himself, and his success against the invaders was rewarded by his grateful suzerain who bestowed the Bāṇa country on him together with the title of Bāṇādhirāja. Pṛithivīpati II, also called Hastimalla, continued to rule as a loyal subordinate of Parāntaka until his death about 940. After Pṛithivīpati's death troubles fell thick on Parāntaka who lost a half of his dominions to Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III after the battle of Takkolam (A.D. 949). Pṛithivīpati's son and successor Nanniya Gaṅga had to face a Nolamba-Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion of his territory, and acknowledge Nolamba suzerainty. He died fighting against the Sāntaras on behalf of the Nolamba about A.D. 955. That was the end of the collateral Gaṅga line of Talakāḍ.

Rājamalla's records show two starting points for his reign, one in A.D. 817 and another two years later;[36] the former was the date when he became *yuvarāja*, ruling the kingdom for his father Vijayāditya, the latter, the date of his kingship in his own right after his father's demise. Though there seems to be no reason to suppose, as has been done by some, that Rājamalla and Pṛithivīpati I fell out and

33 *Ibid.*, v. 17.
34 *Ibid.*, v, 18.
35 *SII*, III, 99.
36 Maṇṇe grant *MAR*, 1910, and Perjjaraṅgi grant, *MAR*, 1942.

fought a civil war, we find them ranged on opposite sides in the conflicts of minor princes—the former supporting the Nolambas and Telugu-Choḍas, and the latter taking the side of the Bāṇas and Vaidumbas, round about A.D. 825, when an important engagement at Soremaḍi (modern Cholemari in the Penugoṇḍa *taluk* of the Anantapur district), after which the advantage lay with the party supported by Pṛithivīpati, as will be seen in more detail in the section on the Bāṇas. Rājamalla's hostility to the Bāṇas led to the invasion of their country by his son-in-law Poḷalchola Nolamba (825-75) who advanced up to Vallimalai near Tiruvallam in the heart of the Bāṇa country, if not up to Kāñchi, as the inscription of Rājamalla claims.[37] A record of Rājamalla at Vallimalai mentions the excavation of a Jaina cave on the hill under his orders.[38] The name of the *agrahāras* called after Rājamalla, Śrīpurusha and Raṇavikrama in the same neighbourhood[39] may also be taken to commemorate this expedition. Hostilities appear to have been continued by Rājamalla's son Nītimārga who claims a victory against the Bāṇas at Murggepāḍi in the Kolār district. But the Bāṇas soon regained their independence under Vikramāditya I, the ablest prince of the line.[40]

The main event of Rājamalla's reign was his effort to throw off the Rāshṭrakūṭa yoke with the assistance of the Nolambas with whom he had dynastic connections. The effort was successful for a time.[41] The sphere of the Rāshṭrakūṭa viceroyalty of Gaṅgavāḍi became much restricted, and a new era of political freedom seemed to dawn on the Gaṅga country which was marked by the assumption of the titles *Satyavākya* and *Nītimārga* alternately by successive rulers, Rājamalla being the first *Satyavākya* and his son Ereganga Raṇavikrama the first *Nītimārga.* The fruits of Rājamalla's contumacy were, however, reaped by his son who had to face a strong invasion led by Baṅkeśa, the Rāshṭrakūṭa general. Nītimārga was defeated in battle and his fortresses captured; Pṛithivīpati who joined the rebellion also suffered and had to face the enemy in the battle of Vaimbalguli as we have seen. But Baṅkeśa was recalled by Amoghavarsha before he could complete his campaign in Gaṅgavāḍi which was taken over by the Eastern Chālukya Guṇaga Vijayāditya III, who had become a loyal vassal of the Rāshṭrakūṭa emperor after initial hostilities with him. Guṇaga invaded the Gaṅga country through Nolambavāḍi after having killed its ruler Poḷalchola (Maṅgi) in battle; the Gaṅga charters mention many battles includ-

37 *EC*, X, Bp. 86; *EI*, IV, 141.
38 9 of 1889; 6 of 1895.
39 *SII*, XII, No. 107 Intr.
40 164 of 1933-34; 196 of 1931-32. *EC*, X, Sp. 5 and 6.
41 *EC*, XII, Sira 24, 38; *MAR*, 1918-19, pp. 29-30.

ing a major engagement at Rājarāmaḍu, though they do not enable us to follow the course of the campaign.[42] In the end Nītimārga made his peace with Amoghavarsha, agreeing to become his vassal and accepting the hand of his daughter Abbalabba for his son Būtuga I. But this did not prevent him and his vassal Mahendra Nolamba, who had succeeded Poḷaḷchola, from falling upon the Bāṇas who had aided the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the late war. The decisive engagement occurred at Murggepāḍi as already noted, and Mahendra took the title *Mahābalikula-Vidhvaṁsana,*[43] and became governor of the newly conquered territory. A rude but interesting bas-relief at Doḍḍahuṇḍi depicts the death of Nītimārga (A.D. 869)[44] who was succeeded by his son Rājamalla II.

Rājamalla II (A.D. 870-907) was ably assisted by his younger brother Būtuga I and nephew Nītimārga II. Būtuga became *yuvarāja* in the very first year of Rājamalla's reign and, after his death fifteen years later in the Nolamba war with Mahendra, his son Nītimārga II took his place[45] (886). Some time about 878 Mahendra set up the standard of revolt, and Būtuga I had to oppose his invasion of Gaṅgavādi on many fields of battle like Biryūr, Sūrūr and Sāmiya, places not identified so far. Būtuga died in the war, and Mahendra evidently had his own way for a time and overran enough of Gaṅga-maṇḍala to proclaim himself lord of that country.[46] But Nītimārga II, eager to avenge his father's death, reversed the fortune of Mahendra in a series of engagements at Miḍigesi, Gaṅgūru and Uttaralige,[47] and after confining him within the walls of his capital Heñjeru (Peñjuru or Hemāvati) took its fortress by assault and killed Mahendra himself. Nītimārga thereupon assumed the proud title *Mahendrāntaka* and the Nolamba war[48] came to an end in 897.

Nītimārga II (907-35), who became king after a long apprenticeship as *yuvarāja,* had to face the hostility of Ayyapa, the son of Mahendra; Ayyappa won several battles against Gaṅga forces. Some time after his death, his son Aṇṇiga renewed the contest with Rājamalla III (A.D. 935-38), son and successor of Nītimārga II, who defeated him in a battle at Kottamaṅgala (938) and made the Nolambas definitely

42 *EI*, IX, 47; *MAR*, 1915, 1919 p. 30; *EC*, XII, Nj 269.

43 *EI*, X, 65.

44 *EI*, VI, pl. i, *EC*, *III*, Tn. 91; 191 of 1894.

45 *EC*, III, Ng. 75, XII, Nj. 269; *MAR*, 1920-21 (Kūḍlūr gr. of Mārasiṁha); *EC*, V, Ag. 70.

46 *EC*, III, Md. 13; Mys. Gaz. II, ii, 572.

47 *EC*, III, Nj, 139.

48 *MAR*, 1910, Tailūr Ins. of Niti. II.

subject to the Gaṅgas.[49] But Rājamalla was dethroned and perhaps killed by his brother Būtuga who received the aid of his wife's brother, the Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III, and aided him in return in his war against a usurper by name Lalleya[50] (A.D. 940) and against the Chola Parāntaka I whose territories were invaded by Krishṇa III (c. A.D. 949). The reign of Būtuga II Jagaduttaraṅga (938-61) is notable for the increasing influence of the Gaṅgas in the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire; vast territories were made over to Būtuga's rule by the partiality of Krishṇa III for him, and this position of vantage continued under his sons. Even Maruladeva (A.D. 961-62), who had a very short reign, is said to have obtained from Krishṇa a state umbrella called Madanāvatāra never obtained by any other king, and his brother Mārasiṁha II (962-74) ushered in the last and brightest chapter of Gaṅga history.

Inheritor of a vast empire comprising the whole of the Mysore table-land and the adjoining parts of the Madras and Bombay States, Mārasiṁha was a great warrior, statesman, and scholar. He was crowned by Krishṇa III on the eve of his northern expedition in which Mārasiṁha had a prominent part and earned the title 'king of the Gurjaras' for himself, and 'Ujjayinī-Bhujaṅgas' for his generals, evidently for distinctions won in a campaign against the Paramāra Harsha Sīyaka of Malwa. After the death of Krishṇa, difficulties fell thick on his successors, Khoṭṭiga and Karka, and it became necessary for Mārasiṁha to defend the interests of his suzerains with all his might. He restored the fortunes of Khoṭṭiga after the disastrous Paramāra invasion and occupation of Mānyakheṭa, though he was unable to stop the effete Karka from falling a prey to the ambition of Taila II who was bent on restoring Chālukya supremacy in western Deccan (973). He made a belated attempt to set up Indra IV, his sister's son and a grandson of Krishṇa III, on the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne, but the Chālukya revolution ran its course and both Mārasiṁha and Indra IV chose to die by the Jaina rite of *sallekhanā* (starvation unto death), the former in 974 and the latter some years afterwards. Among the minor wars of Mārasiṁha was one against the Nolambas at the end of which he took the title *Nolamba-Kulāntaka*. Mārasiṁha II was succeeded by his sons Rājamalla IV (974-83) and Rakkasa Gaṅga (985-1024). The famous general and author Chāmuṇḍarāya served Rājamalla with devotion and inflicted decisive defeats on vassals who aimed at independence like Pāñchāladeva and Mudu-Rāchayya, the latter being killed in open combat. Chāmuṇḍarāya erected the famous monolithic colossus of Gommaṭa at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa. The Chālukya

49 *EC*, XII, Tp. 10; *MAR*, 1916, para. 69; 1925, para. 86; 1921, Kūḍlūr, plates of Mārasiṁha.

50 Kūḍlūr grant of Mārasiṁha.

Rājāditya of Uchchaṅgi and the Nolambas also felt the weight of Chāmuṇḍa's arm. Chāmuṇḍa was a great scholar and writer in Kannaḍa and a patron of scholars. Gaṅga rule came to an end in the reign of Rakkasa Gaṅga by the Chola conquest of Gaṅgavāḍi under the great Chola ruler Rājarāja I.

II. THE KADAMBAS

The Kadambas were a Brahmin family of the Mānavya *gotra* claiming descent from Hārīta. According to the Tālguṇḍa pillar inscription[51] which records their early history their name was derived from a unique Kadamba tree near their dwelling which they tended with great care as it was sacred to their tutelary deity Svāmī Mahāsena (Kārttikeya).

Mayūraśarman of the family went over to the Pallava capital Kāñchī for completing his studies in the renowned *ghaṭikā* there, but an unfortunate quarrel with a Pallava horseman in the city resulted in Mayūraśarman becoming a soldier sworn to enmity with the Pallavas. He entrenched himself in the northern marches of the Pallava kingdom, in the forest country round about Śrīparvata in the Kurnool district, and levying tribute from the Bṛihad-Bāṇas and other vassals of the Pallavas, he harassed the Pallava forces sent against him, avoiding an open battle. At last the Pallavas decided to convert their intrepid opponent into a friend, and crowned him with their own hands making him ruler of the territory between the western sea and Preharā, which may have been either the Malaprabhā or the Tuṅgabhadrā river. This was the beginning of the Kadamba kingdom (*c.* A.D. 350). It is possible that the unsettlement in the south that followed the raid of Samudra-gupta, among others, favoured the rise of Mayūraśarman. The earliest Kadamba inscription known is in the Prākṛit language, and engraved below a short Chuṭu record on a pillar at Malavalli.[52] It does not give the name of the Kadamba ruler, but may well be assigned to Mayūraśarman himself. It confirms and amplifies an earlier gift of Śivaskanda-varman, ruler of Vaijayantī, obviously a Chuṭu king. A shorter Prākṛit record from Chandravalli contains the name of Mayūraśarman and attributes to him conquests in Traikūṭa, Ābhīra, Pallava, Parivātrika, Sakasthāna, Savindaka, Punāṭa and Mokari and stops rather abruptly;[53] the record cannot be accepted as genuine till it receives corroboration, as the Tālguṇḍa inscription has nothing to say of these extensive conquests. Mayūravarman, as mediaeval records call him, was believed in later times to have performed eighteen *aśvamedhas* (horse-sacrifices) and

51 *EI*, VIII, 24-36. 52 *EC*, VII, Sk. 264; *IA*. XLVI, 154-55.
53 *MAR*, 1929, No. i, pp. 50 ff.

distributed 144 villages among the 32,000 Brahmins of the *anādi agrahāra* Sthānakuṇḍūra (Tālguṇḍa). *Yuvarāja* Kakustha-varman, the great-grandson of Mayūraśarman, dates a record in the eightieth *saṁvatsara*,[54] a reckoning dating most probably from the accession of Mayūraśarman. The son and grandson of Mayūraśarman were named respectively Kaṅga-varman (360-85) and Bhagīratha (385-410). The former had to face the invasion of Kuntala by the Vākāṭaka Vindhyaśakti of the Basim branch,[55] and Bhagīratha might have been the ruler of Kuntala to whose court Kālidāsa was deputed as ambassador by Chandra-gupta II Vikramāditya, an event attested by rather late literary evidence, such as the works of Bhoja and Kshemendra.[56] Bhagīratha was succeeded by his elder son Raghu (410-25) with his younger brother Kakustha-varman as his *yuvarāja* holding his court at Pālāsikā (Hālsi). Raghu died childless and Kakustha became king (425-50). He had a prosperous reign marked by the construction of several palaces adorned with towers. He is said to have given his daughters in marriage to many royal families including the Guptas. One of these daughters became the queen of Vākāṭaka Narendrasena and mother of Pṛithivī-sheṇa II.[57] Kakustha made a fresh-water lake within the Śiva temple of Tālguṇḍa as recorded on the celebrated pillar erected by his son and successor Śānti-varman (450-75).

Under Śānti-varman there was perhaps some accession of fresh territory to the kingdom, as he is said to have won three crowns (*paṭṭatraya*) and a record of his son avers that Śānti dragged to himself ,by main force Lakshmī from the palaces of his enemies.[58] He seems, however, to have had to face much hostility from the Pallavas and met the situation by constituting the southern part of the kingdom into a separate charge under his younger brother Kṛishṇa-varman I who is said to have performed a horse sacrifice.[59] In spite of the pretension to independent status, Kṛishṇa-varman seems to have lost his life in war with the Pallavas which also ruined the principality of the Kekayas, the homeland of his queen. The result was that the Pallavas claimed the allegiance of his son Vishṇu-varman who had to accept investiture at their hands, so that a part of Kadamba territory, with Triparvata (Haḷebid?) as centre,[60] and a branch of the royal family, passed for a time under

54 *IA*, VI, 22-24 Hālsi plates.
55 *EI*, XXVI, 148.
56 *PAIOC*, III (1924), p. 6.
57 *EI*, IX, 271 ll, 30-31. Kielhorn's date for the Balaghat plates is clearly too late.
58 *IA*, VI, 24-5.
59 *EC*, VI, Kd. 162; *MAR*, 1925, p. 98; *IA*, VII, 33-35.
60 Moraes: *Kadambakula*, p. 38.

Pallava suzerainty. The Pallava rulers are named Nānakkāsa and Śānti-vara, names otherwise unknown.[61] Śānti-varman's son and successor Mrigeśa-varman is known from several records as having ruled from Vaijayantī (Banavāsi) with Pālāsikā also under his control. In his Hālsi plates of the eighth regnal year,[62] he is called destroyer of the Gaṅgas and destructive fire to the Pallavas, but no details are forthcoming. His scholarship and soldierly qualities are highly praised in the Devagiri plates of the fourth year.[63] He built and endowed a Jaina temple at Hālsi in memory of his father. His queen was Prabhāvatī of the Kekaya family, already mentioned, and she was the mother of Ravi-varman (500-38), during whose minority the kingdom was ruled by Māndhātri-varman (488-500), perhaps a first cousin of Mrigeśa.[64] Ravi-varman has left many records ranging from the fifth to the thirty-fifth year of his reign. A stone inscription records that his queen became a *satī* at his death.[65] There are two undated records of Ravi from Hālsi.[66] One of them relates to the institution of a Jain festival; the other states that Ravi-varman killed Vishṇu-varman and others in battle and occupied Pālāsikā after having driven out Chaṇḍadaṇḍa, the lord of Kāñchī. The identity of Chaṇḍadaṇḍa cannot be established, and in spite of his title connecting him with Kāñchī, which might have been merely a memento of his Pallava origin, he may have belonged, not to the Kāñchī line of rulers, but to the less known branch of Śanti-vara who anointed Vishṇu-varman. It is clear in any event that Ravi-varman renewed the conflict with the Pallavas and gained important successes. Possibly the war was forced on Ravi by the Pallava and his vassal Vishṇu-varman invading the Banavāsi kingdom and penetrating into it as far as Pālāsikā (Hālsi). The result was that the ruler of the collateral line of Kadambas lost his life and the unity of the kingdom was re-established. If the Multagi and Malkāvu villages, granted to a Brahmin by Ravi-varman in his fifth year, were situated very near Taḷakāḍ, it seems probable that the Gaṅgas also joined the confederacy against Ravi-varman and paid for it by having to acknowledge his suzerainty for a time.[67] Ravi-varman was followed by his son Hari-varman (538-50) who ruled from Vaijayantī (Banavāsi)[68] in peace until Krishṇa-varman II, the grandson of Vishṇu-varman, led an

61. *MAR*, 1925, No. 118, p. 98; *EC*, XI, Dg. 161.
62 *IA*, VI, 24-25.
63 *IA*, VII, 37-38.
64 *MAR*, 1911, p. 32.
65 *EC*, VIII, Sb. 523.
66. *IA*, VI, 25-27; 29-30.
67 Nilambur plates, *EI*, VIII, 146-49.
68 *EI*, XIV, 163-8.

expedition against Vaijayantī,[69] put an end to Hari-varman's rule and made himself master of the entire kingdom. Kṛishṇa-varman (550-65) and his son Aja-varman felt the impact of the rising power of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi. Pulakeśin I deprived the Kadambas of their northern marches and established himself at Bādāmi which he fortified as a strong fortress (A.D. 545); his son Kīrti-varman I put an end to Vaijayantī as an independent kingdom. But Aja-varman (565-600) himself or his son Bhogi-varman took advantage of the confusion and civil war due to Maṅgaleśa's attempt to keep Pulakeśin II out of the throne, and once more proclaimed the independence of Vaijayantī for some time.[70] But when Pulakeśin II gained the throne at the end of the war (A.D. 609) it was one of his first tasks to reduce the Kadamba kingdom. A picturesque verse in the Aihole inscription describes his siege of Banavāsi and says that the land fortress of that city took on the appearance of a fortress in the midst of water when it was surrounded by the ocean of Pulakeśin's army.[71] It is possible that Bhogi-varman and his son, Vishṇu-varman, perished in the fight; in any case, the Kadamba kingdom passed definitely to the Chālukya empire (*c.* A.D. 610). If Hiuan Tsang's Kung-kan-na-pu-to (Koṅkaṇapura) may be identified with the Banavāsi kingdom, it is easy to understand why the pilgrim who visited it about A.D. 641 makes no mention of its king, though he notes the existence of 100 Buddhist monasteries and 10,000 monks, a tiara of prince Siddhārtha, a sandalwood image of Maitreya made by the *arhat* Śroṇaviṁśatikoṭi and a forest of *tāla* trees to the north of the capital.[72]

Stray inscriptions contain the names of other early Kadamba princes whose relation to the main line is not known; they are of no interest to general history. The later Kadambas of Hāngal and Goa did not rise to power until about the end of the period covered by this volume and their history will be dealt with in the next.

III. THE BĀṆAS

The Bāṇas were an important feudatory dynasty of rulers who had a long history which is, however, as yet traceable only in parts. They claimed descent from the Asura Mahābali Vairochana of legendary fame who is said to have granted the earth as a sacrifice to Krishṇa[73]—a reference to the *avatāra* of *Vāmana* (dwarf). Bali's son Bāṇa, a devotee of Śiva, is said to have ruled from his capital Śoṇita-

69 *EC*. V, Bl, 245.
70 *MAR*. 1918, p. 40.
71 *EI*, VI, 9-10.
72 *Foreign Notices*, pp. 104-5.
73 Kuḍimallam plates *EI*, XVIII, 1-7.

pura, which is often called Śonagaram in Tamil,[74] a name applied to the coastal town of Markāṇam in S. Arcot. The dynasty takes its name from him. On the strength of an oft-repeated epithet in the inscriptions, Bāṇa is usually said to have been the door-keeper of Śiva; but Rice cites Kannaḍa sources to reverse the relation and make Śiva the door-keeper of Bāṇa.[75] The dynasty had the bull for its crest, the black buck on its banner, and had the *paiśācha* drum among its insignia.[76] The Chola queen Śīrtti, mentioned in the *Maṇimekalai* as the mother of Udayakumāran, is said to have been a Bāṇa princess, but this is only legend. The Muḍiyanūr copper-plate dated Śaka 261 (A.D. 338)[77] is clearly a spurious record, and no reliance can be placed on data drawn from it. It mentions a king Nandivarma of the time of the Dānava chief Mahābali, and his son Vijayāditya; it then speaks of Vijayāditya's son Malladeva Nandi-varman who had the title Śrīva-dhūvallabha, who resembled a Bodhisattva in his concern for the beings in all the three worlds and who is described as the lord of a seven-and-a-half lac country got by means of the 12,000 villages in the Andhra-maṇḍala. Neither the date of the record nor its muddled contents are of interest to genuine history. The genuine inscriptions describe the region ruled over by the Bāṇas as a 12,000 country to the west of the Andhrapatha; they are also called rulers of Gaṅga 6,000, lords of Nandagiri (Nandi Hills) and of Paruvipura.[78] Andhrapatha obviously means Andhra country, like Dakshiṇāpatha, southern country, and not, as is sometimes stated, the road leading to the Andhra country. The Mayidavolu plates mention Daññakaḍa as its capital. So the official description of the Bāṇa territory was that it lay to the west of the Andhra. Parivi is doubtless Parigi in the Hindupur *taluk* of the Anantapur district; and this region has the best claim to be considered the original home of the Bāṇas. In later times we find them ruling over territory to the south-east of this region, called Perumbā-ṇappāḍi, the great Bāṇa country, extending roughly from Puṅganūr and Kolār in the west to Kālahasti and Sholingur in the east with the Pālār as its southern boundary. The idea that the original home of the Bāṇas lay in the region of Śrīśailam[79] whence they were dislodged by the Chālukyas in the seventh century seems to be the result of reading too much into the Tālguṇḍa inscription of Kakustha-varman which says that his ancestor Mayūraśarman overpowered the frontier

74 *Sil.*, VI ll, 54-55 & Aḍiyārkkunallār there on.

75 The compound *sakala-Jagat-trayābhivandita-surāsurādhīśa-Parameśvara-pratīhārī-kṛita-Mahābali-kula* can yield both meanings. See Rice *EC*, X, Intr, ii, n. 5.

76 *SII*, II, 384, v. 24.

77 *EC*, X. Mb. 157.

78 Uday. plates *EI*, III, 74-79; 356 of 1920; 196 and 197 of 1931-32.

79 Venkayya at *EI*, XI, 230-31, esp. No. 5 on p. 230.

guards of the Pallavas in battle and made his home in the impenetrable forests of Śrīparvata before he proceeded to levy tribute on the Bṛihad-Bāṇa and other kings.[80] This mention of Bṛihad-Bāṇa as the contemporary of the first Kadamba king in the middle of the fourth century A.D. is perhaps the earliest mention of the Bāṇas in authentic historical records. An inscription of the tenth century states that the first Gaṅga ruler Koṅgaṇi-varman was appointed for the conquest of Bāṇamaṇḍala;[81] the statement has not yet received corroboration from any authentic earlier document; if we accept it, we may conclude that the early Bāṇas had to face the opposition of the Gaṅgas as well as of the Kadambas.

The powerful Chālukya ruler of Bādāmi, Pulakeśin II, is said to have subjugated the Bāṇa-rāja-vishaya and levied an impost in gold (*teṛe-pon*) from every village in the area.[82] A little later we find Bāṇa chieftains, calling themselves scions of the Peṛbāṇavaṁśa, ruling as feudatories of the Chālukyas over Turmmara-vishaya, roughly the region of Gooty and Jammalamaḍugu *taluks* on the Pennār. They had two important cities in this region—Chitracheḍu and Pāṁbuliggi (Hāmbulige or Hāvaḷige). Three generations of them are mentioned in the inscriptions—Balikulatilaka Narasiṁha Bāṇādhirāja, his son Vikramāditya Bali Indra Bānarāja, and his son not named. The inscriptions mentioning them are dated in the 22nd and 23rd years of Chālukya Vijayāditya, i.e. A.D. 718-19.[83] Towards the close of the reign of Chālukya Kīrti-varman II, *c.* A.D. 757, the unnamed son of Bāṇa Vikramāditya invaded and occupied the Telugu-Choḍa country of Rénāḍu as we know from an inscription at Chilamakūru in the heart of that region.[84] But soon after, the tables were turned on the Bāṇas by the Telugu-Choḍas, who, under Vijayāditya, not only recovered Rénādu but forced the Bānas to acknowledge their suzerainty after the Chālukyas had quitted the stage and the Rāshtrakūṭas had not yet become a force; we find a new Bāṇa chieftain Perbāṇa Bhujaṅgaḍi Bhūpāditya in this new position of subordination to the Telugu-Choḍas.[85] We then lose sight of this branch, though relatively late inscriptions from the Anantapur and Cuddapah districts attest the presence of Bāna chieftains in the region. We hear of a Dhavalevarasa of the Mahābalikula in an inscription of A.D. 885 (Ś. 807) from Poṭṭi-

80 *Yo' ntapadan Pallavedrāṇāṁ sahasā vinirjitya samyuge*||
adhyuvasa durgamāmatavīm Śrīpartadvāra-samśritāṁ||
ādade karān Brihadbāna-pramukhād-bahūn-rājamaṇḍalāt—*EI*, VIII, 32.

81 *SII*, II, 383, v. 13.

82 *SII*, IX (1), No. 46. ll, 6-7.

83 333, and 359 of 1920; 339 of 1905.

84 403 of 1904.

85 474 of 1906, and 339 of 1905.

pāḍu in Jammalamaḍugu *taluk* of the Cuddapah district.[86] Much later, in Chālukya-Vikrama year 12 (A.D. 1088), there was Chikkarasa of Hāmbulige claiming to be a Bāṇa and still continuing allegiance to the Telugu-Choḍa family represented at the time by Ballaya-Choḍa Mahārāja.[87]

A Bāṇa king of Kalbappunāḍu 1,700, named Diṇḍigarar, figures as a subordinate of Gaṅga Śrīpurusha in the undated Kovalaveṭṭu plates.[88] He obtained the permission of his overlord to make a gift of land. A king named Diṇḍigarāja is said in an inscription at Śravaṇa Belgola to have been present at the time of a Jaina guru's death on Kaṭavapra hill which is called Kalbappu in Kannaḍa. That inscription, also undated, has been provisionally assigned to the middle of the seventh century on paleographical grounds. But the present grant shows that king Diṇḍiga belonged to the eighth century, as Śrīpurusha's reign extended from A.D. 726 to 778. Again, the Udayendiram plates of Pṛithivīpati II state that a son of king Diṇḍi was saved by Pṛithivīpati I from the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarsha I. As Amoghavarsha's wars in the Gaṅga country were waged round about A.D. 850 we must take it that Diṇḍiga lived towards the close of Śrīpurusha's reign.

It is, however, of the Bāṇas of the Perumbāṇappāḍi that we get most information. Omitting the stray references such as the battle of Koyāttur between a Mādhava Muttarasa and a Mahāvali Bāṇarasa (*c.* A.D. 725),[89] we are able to trace the fortunes of the family for eight generations continuously with a fairly definite chronology for them. The succession list supplied by the Guḍimallam and Udayendiram plates[90] is as follows:

Jayanandi-varman (A.D. 770-95)

Vijayāditya I (796-835)

Malladeva *alias* Jagadekamalla (835-50)

Vikramāditya I Jayameru (850-95) Bāṇavidyādhara

Vijayāditya II Prabhumeru (895-910) Vīrachūlāmaṇi

Vijayāditya III, Pugalvippavargaṇḍa

Vikramāditya III, Vijayabāhu (965 ?)

86 306 of 1936.
87 *SII*, IX, i, No. 157.
88 *MAR*, 1927, No. 118.
89 *EC*, X, Bp. 13.
90 *EI*, XVII, 1-7; III, 74-9.

The contemporaneity of this line with the Pallavas of Kāñchī from the time of Nandi-varman II Pallavamalla (A.D. 731-96) is well attested by a series of inscriptions in which the Bāṇa feudatories cite the regnal years of their Pallava suzerains.[91] Nandi-varman II Pallavamalla led an expedition into Gaṅgavāḍi and after defeating Śrīpurusha in battle, seized from him the royal necklace containing the gem *Ugrodaya*. This was about A.D. 775. It is quite probable that Bāṇa Jayanandi-varman assisted his Pallava suzerain in this expedition and was rewarded by the gift of some territory from the Gaṅgas, for we find him and his immediate successors laying claim to the rule of Gaṅga 6,000.[92] We find Jayanandi-varman calling himself Māvali-Vāṇarāya and acknowledging the suzerainty of Pallavamalla in a record dated in the sixty-second year (A.D. 793) of the latter.[93]

Of Vijayāditya I we have little information. He is described in the Guḍimallam plates as proficient in the discharge of royal duties (*dharma-kshatra-bhṛitām varaḥ*), and he figures as a feudatory of Pallava Danti-varman in his forty-ninth regnal year (*c.* A.D. 834),[94] when he made a gift of land to provide for the periodical deepening of an irrigation tank called Velléri, in the neighbourhood of Guḍimallam. The next ruler Malladeva is described as the *tilaka* of the Bāṇa-vaṁśa (Guḍimallam plates) and given the title Jagadekamalla in the Udayendiram plates. The title Nandi-varman is given for him in the spurious Muḍiyanūr plates and may imply his subordination to Nandi-varman III, which is even otherwise probable. His name occurs in a Kannaḍa inscription from Chippili, Chittoor district.[95] Malladeva found occasion to expand the Bāṇa power at the expense of the Telugu-Choḍas in the north. About A.D. 825, there was a big trial of strength between the Bāṇas, Vaidumbas and Gaṅga Pṛthivīpati I on one side, and the Nolambas, Telugu-Choḍas and Rājamalla I on the other. It cannot be said definitely whether the dispute started among the minor powers and the two branches of the Gaṅgas favoured the opposite sides in that quarrel, or the dispute was primarily one between the two branches of the Gaṅgas in which the minor powers took part, some on one side and some on the other. The Vaidumbas, it may be noted by the way, make their first appearance in the Madanapalle *taluk* which was part of the Telugu-Choḍa country of Rénāḍu, and most of their records are in the Telugu language. Their records

91 *Five Bāṇa Inscriptions from Guḍimallam*. *EI*, XI, 222 ff. and *IA*, XL, 104-14.

92 *EC*, X, Kl. 235, Bp. 48; 229 of 1903. Also the Kūliḍikki record of the 52nd year of Nandīśvaravarma (*EI*, XXII, 110-13).

93 *SII*, III, 91. Venkayya (*EI*, XI, 234) was clearly wrong in identifying the Pallava suzerain with Nandi. III.

94 226 of 1903. *EI*, XI, 225-26.

95 301 of 1905.

give no more account of their origin than just to say that they won the goddess of fortune by victories won on many a battle-field. They founded their own capital Vaidumbavrolu,[96] and captured Chippili in the neighbourhood, one of the important seats of the Telugu-Choḍas, thus challenging them to conflict. Inscriptions of the time of Gaṇḍa Sankali (*c.* A.D. 800)[97] record the death of soldiers including a brother-in-law of his in the war with the Choḍas. The war of 825 was started by Gaṇḍa Triṇetra Vīra Mahārāja allied with the Bāṇa and Perumanaḍi (Pṛithivīpati I) laying siege to the fortress of Soremaḍi,[98] modern Cholemari in the Penugoṇḍa *taluk* of the Anantapur district. The records state that when it was invested, Soremaḍi was defended by the Telugu-Choḍa Mayindaḍi (i.e. Mahendra-vikrama) who was allied with the Nolamba, with Rājamalla and others.[99] Soremaḍi was situated strategically at the entrance into the Nolamba dominions, subject at this time to the hegemony of Rājamalla I, and its capture would be of great value to his enemies. It would enable the Bāṇas and Vaidumbas to aggrandize themselves at the expense of the Telugu-Choḍas. In fact judging from the course of the war and its actual results, one can hardly resist the feeling that the interests of the allies of the Gaṅgas rather than of the Gaṅga princes themselves dominated the war. Another battle is mentioned as fought between the same parties at Māndāvuda,[100] probably Mānde, eight miles east of Cholemari. It is not known if the battle preceded or followed the siege of Soremaḍi. The results of the war can only be inferred as they are nowhere stated clearly. There is no reference to the war in the records of the Telugu-Choḍas and the Nolambas, or even of Rajāmalla I. But if the main object of the war was to dislodge Rājamalla I from his kingdom and get it under Pṛithivīpati I, that object was not attained, and Rājamalla kept his throne and transmitted it to his descendants. But, perhaps, the main protagonists were the Bāṇas and Vaidumbas aided by Pṛithivīpati, and possibly the Bāṇas were the prime movers. They entered into dynastic alliance with Pṛithivīpati I, and his daughter Kundavai was married to prince Vikramāditya, the son and heir of Malladeva.[101] So strengthened, he joined the Vaidumba in an attack on the Telugu-Choḍa kingdom, and Rājamalla and his feudatory, the Nolamba, went to the aid of that kingdom. The Vaidumba gained large parts of Rénāḍu[102] and the Bāṇa captured Chippili, the

96 346 of 1922.
97 300 and 301 of 1922.
98 *EI*, XXIV, p. 191-2; 296 of 1905; 308 of 1922.
99 295 of 1905; 543 of 1906 (*SII*, IX, i, 14, and 11).
100 102 of 1899; *EC*, X, Mb. 228.
101 *SII*, III, Nos. 46, 47, 48.
102 315-17 of 1912.

Telugu-Choḍa capital, and even encroached further into Telugu-Choḍa region and founded Vāṇavolu near Budili.[103] Gaṇḍa Triṇetra claimed the Kiṛutore (i.e. Pennār) as the northern boundary of his kingdom and assumed the title Lord of Rénāḍu 7,000.[104]

Rājamalla's hostility to the Bāṇas soon found expression in an invasion of the Bāṇa country carried out with the aid of his able feudatory and son-in-law Polalchola Nolambādhirāja (825-75). This resulted in the loss of Gaṅgaṛusāsira[105] followed by an advance up to Vallimalai near Tiruvallam in the heart of the Bāṇa country, if not up to Kāñchī, as an inscription of Rājamalla claims. A record of Rājamalla at Vallamalai mentions the excavation of a Jaina cave on the hill under his orders.[106] The names of the *agrahāras* called after Rājamalla, Śrīpurusha, and Raṇavikrama in the same neighbourhood may also be taken to commemorate this expedition which must have taken place at the end of Malladeva's reign or early in that of his son Vikramāditya I. Hostilities appear to have been continued by Rājamalla's son Nītimārga who claims a victory against the Bāṇas at Murggepādi in the Kolar district.[106a] But Vikramāditya I was perhaps the ablest king of Bāṇa line, and he soon recovered his independent status and control over Gaṅgaṛusāsira.[107]

Vikramāditya I Jayameru of the Guḍimallam plates is described in the Udayendiram grant as Bāṇa Vidyādhara. His queen Kundavai,[108] is mentioned as endowing twenty *kalañju* of gold for ghee for a lamp in the temple of Tiruvallam and depositing the sum with the *sabhā* of that place. He figures as a feudatory of Nandi-varman III in two inscriptions, and of his son and successor Nṛipatuṅga in a third. In the seventeenth year[109] of Nandi-varman III (*c.* A.D. 853) he combines three villages together under the name Vidélviḍugu Vikramāditya Chaturvédimaṅgalam, placing his suzerain's title before his own name, and makes a gift of the reconstituted township to the Śiva temple at Tīkkālivallam, i.e. the Bilvanātheśvara temple of Tiruvallam. The conditions stipulated were that the *sabhā* should pay 2,000 *kāḍi* of paddy and twenty *kalañju* of gold to the temple for the maintenance of Śiva-brāhmaṇas (priests), the drummers and other temple servants, including the singers of *Tiruppadiyam*, as well as for lamps,

103 301 of 1905 (*SII*, IX, i, No. i) and 811 of 1917.
104 *EC*, X, Bg. 62 and *ARE* 1936-37, II, 70.
105 *EC*, X, Bp. 86.
106 *EI*, IV, 141; 91 of 1889; 6 of 1895.
106a *SII*, XII, No. 107 Intr.
107 164 of 1933-34; 196 of 1931-32; *EC*, X, Sp. 5 and 6.
108 See n. 29 ante.
109 *SII*, III, p. 93; Sewell mentions an inscription giving A.D. 873-74 as his second year, *HISI*, 328, but gives no reference.

anointment of idols, temple repairs and other allied purposes. This is, it may be noted in passing, one of the earliest references to the singing of Tamil hymns of the *Dēvāram* in temples. Another record from Guḍimallam,[110] dated in the 23rd year of Nandi-varman III, mentions Vikramāditya's rule in Vaḍugavaḷi-mērku and records the gift, after purchase (*vilai śrāvaṇai*), of land for the maintenance of a lamp before Mahādeva of the Paraśurāmīśvara temple; the donor was a member of the executive (*āluṅgaṇam*) of the *ūr*, and the *sabhā* took charge of the land and promised to arrange for the lamp being lighted regularly. In the twenty-fourth year of Nṛipatuṅga (*c.* A.D. 879), another record also from Guḍimallam gives the full Bāṇa *praśasti* and mentions Vikramāditya's reign over Vaḍugavaḷi-mērku. Towards the end of Vikramāditya's reign there was a Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion of Bāṇa territory which evidently forced them to transfer their allegiance to the Rāshṭrakūṭas in place of the Pallavas. About this time the Pallavas were hard pressed by the hostility of the Pāṇḍyas and the growing power of their vassals, particularly the Cholas. The victory of Śrīpuṟambiyam in A.D. 880 against Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa II was achieved only with the active aid of Chola Āditya I and Gaṅga Prithivīpati who lost his life on the field of battle. Āditya entertained schemes of reviving the past glory of the Cholas and was embarking on a career of aggression which Nṛipatuṅga and his associate kings Aparājita and Kampa-varman were finding it increasingly difficult to check. In fact it ended in the overthrow of the Pallavas and the death of Aparājita about A.D. 898. Under these conditions it was no wonder that the Rāshṭrakūṭas sought to extend the sphere of their control, and the Pallavas were unable to go to the aid of the Bāṇas.

The story of the Rāshṭrakūta successes against the Bāṇas, in which the Vaidumbas were also fellow-sufferers, is to be gathered from their records and a small number of stone inscriptions in the Chittoor district. On the very day of his coronation in A.D. 915 Indra III claims credit for two achievements (1) an easy victory over Meru[111] followed by (2) a success against Upendra who had captured Govardhana.

The Meru mentioned above was no other than Bāṇa Vikramāditya I Jayameru. An inscription from Kappalle (Chittoor dist.)[112] states that while Jayameruprabhu was ruling over Vaḍugavaḷi 12,000 and Gaṅga 6,000 a certain Mahārāja raided the village of Chemmagūru for cattle lifting and records a gift of land to the memory of a warrior who

110 229 of 1903; *EI*, XI, 224, 226-7, A and C.

111 *EI*, IX, pp. 24-41, Begumra plates, v. 23. The verse is an involved pun, and its full implications have been discussed by me in a paper on *The achievements of Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III as Yuvarāja*.

112 164 of 1933-34.

fell in the fight. Two other undated records[113] from the same place of the reign of Kannaradeva (Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa II) also mention an attack made by him on Chemmagūru and relate the death of two warriors who fell fighting. All these records doubtless refer to the war in which Chemmagūru suffered a raid. Other inscriptions are also connected with the war. A record of Vaidumba Pallo-arasa, a son of Manuja Triṇetra, with dates contemporary with those of Krishṇa II, also refers to incidents in the same struggle, mentioning an attack on Kappalle itself.[114] Lastly Mahendrādhirāja Nolamba, a feudatory of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, states in a record of Ś. 815 (A.D. 893) that he was ruling the earth after destroying the race of Mahabali—*Śrī Mahabalikula-vidhvaṁsanam geyudu prithivī-rājyam geyuttiṛe.*[115] This is perhaps chronologically the earliest reference to the hostilities from the Rāshṭrakūṭa side aided by the Vaidumbas against the Bāṇas which developed in the course of the succeeding years and led ultimately to the Bāṇas becoming the feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. It must have been after this that Vikramāditya found occasion to go to N.E. Deccan in the company of Rāshṭrakūṭa forces and build a temple at Pali, twelve miles north of Ratanpur.[116] He gets the title Bāṇa-kandarpa in some records of his son's time.

The inscriptions of Vijayāditya II Prabhumeru range from Ś. 820 to 831 (A.D. 898-909). Their dates in the Śaka era and not in the regnal years of monarchs of other lines may be accepted as an indication of a spell of independence for the Bāṇas. In 898 his queen Mahādevi Aḍigal endowed 30 *kalañju* of gold for lights and offerings at *sandhyākāla* in the temple of Guḍimallam.[117] Another inscription dated seven years later records a private endowment of 20 *kalañju* of gold for a lamp in the same temple.[118] This inscription gives some very interesting economic data. The rate of interest was 4 *mañjāḍi* per *kalañju* per annum, the *mañjāḍi* was one-twentieth of *kalañju,* and the rate of interest was 20 per cent per annum. Again one *kalañju* of gold purchased 45 measures of *ghee,* the endowment being equal to 180 measures of ghee for a year of 360 days—half a measure of ghee being the daily requirement for burning a lamp.

A record from Puṅganūr[119] of Vijayāditya II Virachūlāmaṇi refers to a raid on Koyāṭṭūr by Kāḍuveṭṭi Muttarasan, a general of the

113 168 and 170 of 1933-34.
114 165 of 1933-34; 328 of 1922.
115 *EI,* X, 65 ll, 24-26. (304 of 1911). Also *EC,* X, Kt. 79.
116 *PIHC,* III, 323 ff. It is difficult to accept Mirashi's theory of a Bāṇa kingdom up in the north.
117 *EI,* XI, 227-28; 223 of 1903.
118 224 of 1903; *EI,* XI, 228-29.
119 542 of 1906.

Nolamba Mahendra; another record[120] from the same neighbourhood mentions a raid on Puli-nāḍu by the Nolamba king under the orders of Koṅgaṇiaraśar and the capture of Koyāṭṭūr; a third inscription[121] gives more details. It states that under the orders of his suzerain, Permāḍi, the Nolambādhirāja (Mahendra) led a successful expedition against Talakāḍu, in the course of which he despatched two of his subordinate chiefs, Kāḍuveṭṭi and Maḍuru, against Puli-nāḍu. The latter captured and burnt the town of Permāvi. This roused the indignation of the Bāṇa king Vijayāditya Vīrachūlāmaṇi Prabhumeru who dispersed the enemy forces and killed many chiefs in the conflict. Lastly there are Bāṇa records[122] in the Kolar district mentioning gifts to soldiers who fell in fight at the command of Prabhumeru against the entire Kāḍuveṭṭi forces at Māvindanūr. But as one of these records begins with a verse mentioning Vikramāditya Jayameru, we have to postulate a somewhat long-drawn struggle. As the records stand, we have to assume that the engagement at Mavindanūr took place when Vikramāditya was still living, and his son fought for him as *yuvarāja*, and that the other incidents like the capture of Permāvi and the raid of Koyāṭṭūr represent later stages in the war which continued after the death of Vikramāditya. However that may be, we find that the alignment of forces which began at Soremaḍi was still being continued and that the Bāṇas and Nolambas were taking sides in the wars of the rival branches of the Gaṅgas.

The last date known for Vijayāditya is A.D. 909 which occurs in an inscription from the Kolār district.[123] It was in the reign of his son Vikramāditya II that the Bāṇa dominion was extinguished by Chola Parāntaka I. At the commencement of his reign, Vikramāditya II seems to have aided Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II in the campaign he undertook against Parāntaka I who, at his accession, had superseded the claims of his half-brother Ādityan Kannaradeva, a grandson of Kṛishṇa II.[124] In the battle of Vallāla (i.e. Tiruvallam in Bāṇa country) that followed (A.D. 911-12) the Gaṅga ally of Parāntaka greatly distinguished himself. Kṛishṇa II and the Bāṇa suffered defeat, and Parāntaka assumed the title of Vīra Chola. Parāntaka followed up his success in the next few years and uprooted two Bāṇa kings and conquered the Vaidumbas. One of the Bāṇa kings was doubtless Vikramāditya II; the other might have been his son Vijayāditya III. The Bāṇa kingdom was taken away by the Chola and handed over to his loyal feudatory Pṛithivīpati II together with the title Bāṇādhirāja.

120 318 of 1912.
121 306 of 1912.
122 *EC*, X, Sp. 5 and 6.
123 *EC*, X, Mb. 229.
124 *EI* XXVI, No. 10.

This happened by about A.D. 916, the date of the Sholingur inscription which mentions the fact.[125] What happened after the Chola conquest is very obscure. Possibly the 'uprooting' by Parāntaka meant no more than a defeat followed by submission, in which case Pṛithivīpati II must have been imposed as a sort of intermediary between the Chola emperor and the Bāṇa; but it appears more likely that the Bāṇas actually lost their kingdom and had to seek refuge in the Rāshṭrakūṭa court. The only other certain fact we get after the Chola conquest is that Vijayabāhu Vikramāditya III was a friend of Kṛishṇarāja, i.e. Rashṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III. This is mentioned in the Udayendiram grant which records a gift of Vikramāditya III. The Guḍimallam plates were issued by Vikramāditya II as *yuvarāja* with the consent of his father. There are no transactions on record either of his reign as king or of the reign of his son Vijayāditya III. We may legitimately infer that the Chola conquest suspended Bāṇa rule in Perumbāṇappāḍi, which was given over to Pṛithivīpati II. It did not revive until the successful expedition of Kṛishṇa III into Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam towards the close of the reign of Parāntaka I and the decisive battle of Takkolam A.D. 949-50 put Kṛishṇa in a position to restore his friend Vikramāditya III to the rule of his kingdom. Kṛishṇa's political settlement of the northern part of the Chola empire lasted some years, and apparently even the Cholas had to recognise it for a while. There is a record of the ninth year of a Rājakesari[126] mentioning Ariñjigaippirāṭṭiyār, a Bāṇa queen and daughter of prince Arikulakesari. If this Rājakesari was Sundara Chola II, as seems probable, the inscription would fall about A.D. 965, that is about the time when Sundara Chola was waging war in the north recovering territory lost to Kṛishṇa III by his grandfather Parāntaka I. As Arikulakesari is referred to as prince, he must have been a son of Sundara, and the Bāṇa queen the daughter of this son, the Bāṇa ruler being no other than Vikramāditya III himself. Even so Bāṇa rule did not long continue in this region after this, and as far as we know Vikramāditya III was the last ruler of the line.

Princes claiming Bāṇa connections continue to figure in various subordinate capacities for many centuries afterwards, but to trace them out systematically is hardly worth while.

IV. PUNNĀṬA

The ancient principality of Punnāṭa is mentioned by Ptolemy under the name Pounnata as famous for its beryls. Padiyūr in the Dhāhāpuram *tāluk* of the Coimbatore district, where beryl was found until early in the nineteenth century, doubtless formed part of that principality. An inscription of the kings of Punnāṭa states

125 *EI*, IV, 221.
126 215 of 1911 (*Colas*, I, 376).

that the Kāvérī and Kapinī rivers watered the country and that its villages were full of wealthy people who possessed she-buffaloes, cows, horses, woollen blankets, gems, gold, silver, pearl and coral, besides annual crops of wheat, rice, barley and other grains. The Jaina writer Harisheṇa in his *Bṛihatkathākośa* (A.D. 930) says that Bhadrabāhu and his followers came and settled in the Punnāṭa country when they had to migrate from the North early in the third century B.C. in order to escape a twelve years famine foretold by the patriarch. There are Sanskrit inscriptions of the seventh century A.D. purporting to record the story of the migration and what followed.

Punnāṭa is described at different times as a province of 10,000 or 6,000 in early records, and was known as Haḍināḍ in the sixteenth century. Its capital was Kiṭṭūr or Kīrttipura on the Kapinī (Kabhani) river in the Heggaḍadevankoṭe *tāluk*. The Chandravalli stone inscription of Kadamba Mayūraśarman apparently includes Punnāṭa among the countries conquered by him in the middle of the third century A.D. The kings of Punnāṭa are known from two copper-plate charters. They belonged to the Tāmra-Kāśyapakula and ruled for six generations in the third and fourth centuries A.D. The earliest king was Vishṇudāsa (*c.* A.D. 240) who is said to have had a retinue of conquered kings who carried out his behests and to have firmly established *dharma*. His son Rāshṭravarmā was well versed in the lore of horses and other arts. He had three sons by his queen Prabhāvatī, the eldest of whom, Pṛithivīpati, acquainted with many sciences, either ruled only for a short while or did not rule at all, and gave place to his younger brother, Nāgadatta (*c.* A.D. 280). It is possible that Mayūraśarman's conquest of Punnāṭa was effected in the reign of the peaceful Pṛithivīpati and led to his supersession by Nāgadatta. Nāgadatta's son was Nṛipaśrī Bhujagādhirāja. The terms *śrī* and *adhirāja* in this name have been taken to indicate unusual prosperity and a higher status for the king of Punnāṭa; but this seems to be wrong, for *adhirāja* is here a part of the personal name and *śrī* is only the common honorific. Bhujaga's son was Skandavarmā who gave his daughter in marriage to the Gaṅga Avinīta. Ravidatta, the brother of the princess married to Avinīta, is the last king of the line so far known, and he must have ruled at the beginning of the fifth century A.D. After him the Punnāṭa kingdom seems to have merged in that of the Gaṅgas under Durvinīta, the son of Avinīta. Punnāṭa survives in later records under that name and as Haḍināḍ, a well known territorial unit.[127]

127 *IC* III, 303-17, gives a detailed discussion of the history of Punnāṭa with full references to the sources.

V. THE ĀLUPAS

Another feudatory family of note were the Āḷupas (lit. rulers) of North and South Kanara, and the Kaḍūr and Shimoga districts, all of which formed at one time the region of Āḷupa rule, viz. Āḷuvakheḍa 6,000—a name which came in course of time to be restricted to the Tuluva country in South Kanara. There are clear references to the Āḷupas from the seventh to the eleventh century A.D. in the inscriptions of Pulakeśin II and Vinayāditya, of Govinda III, and of Kadamba Jayakeśin I of Goa, as well as in the poem of Bilhaṇa. They were an indigenous family of the Nāga race who ruled first from Udiyāvara, then from Bārakūr, and finally from Mangalore—all coastal cities in the South Kanara district. All their known records on stone are in archaic characters and in the Kannaḍa language. Ptolemy seems to mention Āḷuvakheḍa (*Eloikhora*) as a separate unit in the second century A.D., and the Halmīḍi stone inscription[128] of the fifth century contains a general reference to Āḷu, i.e. Āḷuva country. We then hear of Māramma Āḷuvaraśan as contemporary with the Western Chālukya Kīrtivarman I, who began the conquest of the Āḷuva and Kadamba countries which was completed by his successors. Māramma was followed by Sakala-śrīmat Āḷuvaraśar (*c.* 600), Kundavarmarasa (*c.* 625), Āḷu-Arasar Guṇasāgara (*c.* 650) and his son Chitravāhana I (*c.* 675-700), all of them feudatories of the contemporary Chālukya rulers of Bādāmi. After the reign of Chitravāhana, for close upon a century, Āḷupa history is marked by civil wars and relatively short reigns, Raṇasāgara, Śvetavāhana, Pṛithivīsāgara Āḷupendra, Vijayāditya Āḷupendra, and Chitravāhana II were among the kings who reigned successively till about A.D. 800 after which date there occurs a gap in Āḷupa genealogy. We have the names of several rulers for the next two centuries, but we know little of their deeds or of their mutual relationship. Kundavarmarasa II was noted for his effort to enforce prohibition.[129] The Āḷupas had their own council of ministers which is often mentioned in their inscriptions, and they recognized the autonomy of municipal corporations (*nagara samūha*) and district and village assemblies (*deśa-purushas* and the *jagattu*), the numbers of the assemblies varying according to the size and population of the area concerned.[130]

VI. THE CHĀLUKYAS OF VEMULAVĀḌA[131]

The history of this branch of Chālukyas is to be gathered from three Sanskrit inscriptions they have left and from allusions to them in the

128 *MAR*, 1936, 72-81. 129 *SII*, VII, No. 191, v, 3.

130 Āḷupa history is discussed in detail by B. A. Saletore in *Ancient Karnāṭaka*, Vol. I. *History of Tuluva*, 57-194; also *EI*, IX, 15 ff.

131 *Journal of the Madras University*, XV, 101-29.

Bhārata of the Kannaḍa poet Pampa. The line may be said to begin with Yuddhamalla I for whom we have a date in A.D. 731 and who is praised extravagantly for his heroism in war and for the extent of his conquests. In the Vemulavāḍa stone inscription[132] he is said to have ruled the Sapādalaksha country and had many feudatories under him. He is also credited with the capture of the natural fortress of Chitrakūṭa and to have provided for regular oil-baths for his war-elephants in artificial tanks at Podana. Though we may not be quite definite about the origins of the line, we have good reason to assume tentatively that Yuddhamalla I was the youngest of the sons of Dharāśraya Jayasiṁhavarman of Lāṭa who owed his viceroyalty of the Lāṭa country to his elder brother Chālukya Vikramāditya I of Bādāmi. An ambitious and adventurous prince, Yuddhamalla found little scope for his energy in the home country, particularly as he was the youngest of a number of able sons of Jayasiṁha. So he sought service under the rising Rāshṭrakūṭa prince Dantidurga and indeed the history of the Vemulavāḍa line of Chālukyas is best regarded as a footnote to that of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Dantidurga's early campaigns, it is well known, were conducted in the Madhyadeśa, and we must suppose that Yuddhamalla took part in the early wars of Dantidurga including the capture of Chitrakūṭa (Chitor) on the direct line between Lāṭa and Sapādalaksha (Sambhar in E. Rājasthān) and a temporary mastery over the Sapādalaksha country itself. He was rewarded for his services with the grant of a fief nearer home in Bodhan (Podana) in the Nizamabad district in the northern part of the old Hyderabad State, and this became the base for the further achievements of his successors. Yuddhamalla had the title Vinayāditya.

The son of Yuddhamalla I was Arikesari, the donor of the Kollipāṛa plates which record a grant to a Śaiva ascetic of Eleśvara to the north of the celebrated mountain Śrīśaila in the Kurnool district. He is said to have been an adept in many subjects like grammar, law, elephant lore, logic, archery and medicine. In the reign of Dhruva Nirupama (A.D. 780-93) Arikesari seized Veṅgī and Trikaliṅga on behalf of his suzerain. Parts of his new conquests seem to have been placed under Arikesari's rule as his fief, and we may date-the shifting of the capital of Vemulavāḍa from this time. Of the next four generations, covering nearly a century, all our sources are strangely reticent. The rulers of the period were, in chronological order, Narasiṁha I Rājāditya, Yuddhamalla II, Baddega I, and

132 *JAHPS*, VI, 169-92. The name *Savalakha* applied to the Vīmulavāḍa region in later records (*JOR*, XVIII, 40) is best regarded as a memento of Yuddhamalla's early exploits.

Yuddhamalla III. The portion of the Vemulavāḍa stone inscription dealing with Yuddhamalla II seems to record some of his achievements, but cannot be made out exactly owing to the worn out condition of the record. Of Baddega we learn from Pampa that he was victorious in forty-two great battles and thus earned the title 'the soldier who knew no defeat' (*solada-gaṇḍa*). Pampa adds: he fought his battles against Bhīma and took him captive. This is a reference to the long-drawn wars of the Rāshṭrakūṭas in Veṅgi in which, as we learn from the charters of the Eastern Chālukyas, Chālukya Bhīma I had to reconquer his kingdom which had passed under the occupation of the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces. We find here that Baddega was the loyal and doughty champion of the Rāshṭrakūṭas on their eastern marches.

The son of Yuddhamalla III was Narasiṁha II of whom we hear a great deal more than of his predecessors. The Vemulavāḍa inscription describes his conquest of the Mālavas and Gurjaras at some length, and Pampa gives a full account of his achievements as he was the father of his patron Arikesari II. It is clear from the inscriptions and Pampa's verses that Narasiṁha took an active part in the campaign of Kṛishṇa II against the Lāṭa country and that of his successor Indra III against Mahīpāla I, the celebrated Gurjara emperor who was sent into temporary exile by the Rāshṭrakūṭa conqueror. Pampa makes particular mention of the Lāṭas as the enemies of Narasiṁha and gives him the title Sakalalokāśraya, a favourite *biruda* of the Chālukyas of Lāṭa. He refers to the burning and ravaging of the seven Mālavas, the defeat of the Gurjara king in battle, and the seizure of his elephants. He gives a picturesque description of the cowering restless condition of Mahīpāla on whom Narasiṁha descended like a thunderbolt. He adds that Narasiṁha's horses drank the waters of the Ganges and were stationed in the precincts of Kālapriya (Kālpi). The queen of Narasiṁha was Jākavve, a sister of Indra III. The son of Narasiṁha II and Jākavve was Arikesari II who married Revakanimmaḍi, a daughter of Indra III. Arikesari is famous as the patron of Pampa, and for the apparently decisive part he played in the political revolution in which the *sāmantas* of Govinda IV (930-34) dethroned him and transferred the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire to Baddega Amoghavarsha III. The son of Arikesari II was Baddega II, whose son Arikesari III calls himself the vassal of Kṛishṇa III and makes a grant in 966[133] to a Jain temple erected by his father in the capital and known as Subhadhāma Jinālava. The grant was received by the celebrated Jaina divine and author Somadevasūri, author of *Yaśodhara-charita*, also called *Yaśastilaka-champū*,

133 Parbhaṇi plates—*JBISM*, XII, 3.

Syādvādopanishad and other works including a treatise on polity—*Nītivākyāmṛita.*

VII. THE TELUGU-CHODAS

The Telugu-Choḍas were an important feudatory dynasty who are first found ruling in the region of Anantapur and Cuddapah districts from about the sixth century A.D. In later times they split up into several branches, recognizing the suzerainty of the imperial Cholas, the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇī, the Kākatīyas, and the Eastern Gaṅgas. The history of these later branches does not concern us here. The early line claimed descent from Karikāla, the most celebrated of the Chola kings of the Śaṅgam Age in the Tamil country, and retained the title 'rulers of the noble city of Uṛaiyūr', the early Tamil Chola capital. This claim is put forward in a relatively simple form in the Mālepāḍu plates of Puṇyakumāra, early in the seventh century, and is elaborated with many embellishment in subsequent inscriptions and literature.[134] Typical of the final form reached by the Telugu-Choḍa *praśasti* is the following from an inscription[135] of S. 980 (A.D. 1058): *Svasti, aridurdhara varabhujāsi-bhāsura-prachaṇḍa pradyotadinakarakula-nandana Kaśyapagotra Karikālānvaya, śikhiśikhadhvaja, siṁhalāñchhana, Kāverīnātha Oṛeyūrpuravareśvāra, Kambaraparekhoshaṇa, Kollimalaipurāntaka.* The mention here of the peacock-banner and the lion-crest deserves notice; the Tamil Cholas had the tiger both on their banner and for their crest; the Telugu branch, apparently adopted new emblems under local influences. We may not be sure that the lion symbol, very common among the ruling families of the Telugu country and among the Kadambas, had any connection with the prevalence of Buddhism in the Andhra country as has been suggested; the lion was the mount (*vāhana*) of Durgā, and the Kāñchīpuram inscription of Jaṭā-Choḍa-Bhīma expressly states that the Telugu-Choḍas got their lion-crest from goddess Amara-Durgā.[136] The manner in which the Choḍas established themselves in the Telugu country is not known. It seems likely that when their power diminished at the close of the Śaṅgam Age and the Pallava power became important, members of the Chola family accepted service under the Pallavas, and found occasion in course of time to establish themselves on the northern marches of the Pallava dominion. Like all feudatory dynasties, they were ready to proclaim their independence when they got the chance, acknowledging the suzerainty of

134 See *Studies in Cola History and Administration*, ii. 'Karikāla in History and Legend'.

135 468 of 1923.

136 *EI*, XXI, 29 ff.

stronger neighbours at other times either voluntarily or under duress. Some hold, however, though on slender grounds, that Karikāla displaced the Pallavas from Kāñchī about the fourth century A.D., that his sway extended into the ceded districts and that the Cholas must have settled in the Telugu country in this period.[137] A legendary Pallava king known as Trilochana or Triṇayana (three-eyed) is said to have been punished by Karikāla by the blinding of his superfluous eye when he refused to assist his suzerain in the raising of the flood-banks of the Kāverī; this puerile legend which makes its first appearance in inscriptions and literature in the tenth and eleventh centuries can furnish no basis for history.

The earliest known line of Telugu-Choḍas ruled in the Rénāḍu or Mahārājapāḍi (king's country) from about the beginning of the sixth to the middle of the ninth century A.D. The family seems to have begun its rule at Erigal or Niḍugal in the Tumkur district on the borderland between the Pallava and Kadamba dominions, and the earliest king of whom we hear is Nandi-varman (A.D. 500) whose name indicates a subordinate relation to the Pallavas of Kāñchī; one of the last Pallava kings of the Sanskrit charters is known to have borne that name. Of the three sons of Nandi-varman, the eldest, Siṁhavishṇu (another Pallava name), succeeded him and conquered Parivi-vishaya from the Pallavas at the time when they were preoccupied with hostilities against the Chālukyas of Bādāmī. The younger brothers of Siṁhavishṇu were Sundarananda and Dhanañjaya[138], the latter being described as Erigal *mutturāju* ruling Rénāḍu. All the brothers seem to have simultaneously ruled in different areas according to the Mālepāḍu plates of Puṇyakumāra which say that they and their descendants for some generations enjoyed royal rule. Nothing is known, however, of the Siṁhavishṇu line.

Dhanañjaya was followed by his son Navarāma or Mahendra-vikrama I Chola Mahārāja *c.* A.D. 600. He bore the title *Muditaśilākshara*, justified by his well-chiselled stone inscriptions. At first a subordinate of Siṁhavishnu and Mahendra-varman I of Kāñchī, as evidenced by the resemblance of his titles with those of Mahendra-varman, he seems to have affirmed his independence later just like Siṁhavishṇu Choḍa. He had a *dugarāja* (*yuvarāja*) of Erigal under him, possibly his eldest son Gunamudita. The younger son Puṇyakumāra was *mutturāja* of Erigal and ruled over southern Rénāḍu with Chippili as his capital. After Gunamudita's rule as king (620-25), he succeeded him in the rule of Rénāḍu with Māle-

137 *IA*, 1908, p. 284; *EI*, XV, p. 248 and n. 2.

138 See *EI*, XXVII, 220ff, for a detailed discussion of the history of the Telugu-Choḍas.

pāḍu as his capital. Guṇamudita seems to have left no sons. Puṇyakumāra's accession seems to have taken place when Mahendravarman I was still on the throne of Kāñchī. Some of his titles like *Marunrupiḍugu, Madanavilāsa, Mārdavachitta, Purushaśārdūla,* and *Pormukharāma* bear close resemblance with the titles of Mahendravarman and may indicate subordination to him in the early stages; but the titles *Mahārāja, Prithivīvallabha* and so on indicate his independent status as a ruler. As king he conquered Hiraṇyarāshṭra (Kamalapuram and Cuddapah *tāluks*) in his fifth regnal year (630-31) possibly from the Pallavas. Thenceforth he was the ally and feudatory of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi after a short period of precarious independence marked by the imperial titles already noticed. Hiuan Tsang who visited the country (Chuliye) about A.D. 641-2 does not mention the name of its ruler.

The next king after Puṇyakumāra was Vikramāditya Chola Mahārājādhirāja (650-75), possibly a son of Puṇyakumāra, though we get no direct statement to that effect. He was a contemporary of Chālukya Vikramāditya I whose Talamanchi plates (13 July, A.D. 660) show that his power extended as far as the Nellore district, and one of whose inscriptions, dated in his twenty-seventh year, mentions a Telugu-Choḍa *mutturāja* as *ājñapti*.[139] Vikramāditya Choḍa was followed by his son Śaktikumāra (675-700), and after him came his son Vikramāditya II Choḍa Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara. The queen of the last-mentioned monarch was Choḍa-Mahādevī who is seen from inscriptions to have taken an active part in the administration. By the time of the next monarch Satyāditya (725-50) the Telugu-Choḍa kingdom had come to include Siddhi 1000 (modern Sidhout). But soon after, the Choḍas suffered a reverse and their territory passed for a time under Vikramāditya Perbāṇādhirāja, a feudatory of Chālukya Vijayāditya of Bādāmi.[140] Telugu-Choḍa power was restored by Prithivīvallabha Vijayāditya about A.D. 760 and the Bāṇas of Pāmbuliggi (Hāvalige) became subject to him. He also struck up a friendship with the Pallava Nandi-varman II, and this relation continued long after him for nearly a century as we find a Choḍa Mahārāja Kumārāṅkuśa acting as *vijñapti* in the Velūrpālaiyam plates of Nandi-varman III.

Of the descendants of Sundarananda who were perhaps ruling over Būdili and its neighbourhood, only two late members, Mahendra and his son Kāṇi Bola, are known by name. They seem to have maintained cordial relations with the collateral branches. Mahendra had another son Elañjola whose conflict with the rising Rāshṭrakūṭa

139 364 of 1920.
140 403 of 1904.

power is attested by a *vīrakal* (hero-stone) recording the death of a soldier in a fight against Dantiyamma Maṅgu, a vassal of Dantidurga. Later came the invasion of Kṛishṇa I. Kāpi Bola Mutturāju was evidently the younger son of Mahendra; he ruled over Kandakoṭṭi (Goṇḍikoṭa?) in Rāmaḍi-nāḍu;[141] raids led by him against the Rāshṭrakūṭa country (Raṭṭapāḍi) and the Bāṇas are attested by inscriptions.[142]

A certain Dhanañjaya II (*c.* 750-68) of Erigal-vādi whose relation to the other monarchs is not known, bore the title *Adhirāja* and provoked a Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion by his raids and suffered a defeat at Tiruvūra (*c.* 768); the forces of the Rāshṭrakūṭas were led by a Chālukya general Balavarma, and he was assisted by the Kadamba feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Dhanañjaya was defeated in battle, several generals of his being killed, and his territory merged in the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom.[143]

After Mahendra II and his sons, we hear of Nṛipakāma (*c.* 800) and Divākara (*c.* 825). The last is said to have become a scholar at an early age. The last known ruler of the line of Sundarananda was Adhirāja Śrīkaṇṭha (*c.* 850) who suffered a curtailment of his kingdom by the rise of the Bāṇas, Vaidumbas and Nolambas under Rāshṭrakūṭa protection. He ruled in the S.E. corner of the Cuddapah district, and it seems probable that Kumārāṅkuśa was one of his immediate descendants.

The history of the Telugu-Choḍas becomes very obscure in the tenth century A.D. The few records of the family found in different parts of the Telugu country do not enable us to trace the interrelation of its numerous branches and give a connected account; but some of the important centres of their power and the names of the outstanding rulers may be noted. Pottapi in the Rajampeta *tāluk* of the Cuddapah district became the most important seat of the Choḍas from which they spread in different directions. Pottapi appears to have risen to prominence before the close of the tenth century A.D. The conquest of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam by Āditya I brought the Telugu-Choḍas into contact with the imperial Cholas of the Tamil country. Āditya, as we have seen, died at Toṇḍamanāḍ near Kālahasti in the Chittoor district which was included in Pottapi-nāḍu at this time, and Pottapi, the headquarters of the district, was not far from it. The assumption of the title *Madhurāntaka* by the Telugu-Choda ruler of the place clearly shows that he not only became a feudatory of the imperial Cholas, but accompanied his

141 *EC*, XII. Mi. 94.
142 *EC*. X. Gb. 76: 341 of 1905.
143 *EC*, XII. Mi. 93 and 101.

overlord Parāntaka in his expedition against Madurai and participated in the capture of the city before A.D. 910. Madhurāntaka Pottapi Chola was the founder of a new line of kings who continued to rule during the next two centuries. Balliya Chola Mahārāja who was ruling Pottapi before A.D. 971-72 was probably one of his immediate successors.[144] From Pottapi the Telugu-Choḍas spread northwards. A branch of the family established itself in Eruva, the tract of territory in the borderland of the present Nellore, Kurnool and Guntur districts; another branch made Pedakal in the Kurnool district its headquarters; Siddhi Chola and Telunga Bijjana who were ruling Kanne 300, and the country extending northwards as far as Etgir in the Gulbarga district of the old Hyderabad State in the time of Āhavamalla Someśvara I and his sons, appear to have been connected with the Pedakal family. An older branch of the Choḍas of Rénāḍu was ruling the western marches of the Telugu country; and it appears to have fought often with the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

The most powerful Telugu-Choḍa chief of this dark period was, of course, Choḍa Bhīma, son of Jaṭā Choḍa Pedakal.[145] Only two records of Jaṭā Choḍa and his son have come to light so far. A short epigraph[146] at Miḍutūru in the Cuddapah *tāluk* of the Cuddapah district records the gift of land by the king to a Brahmin officer who devastated the village of Tippalūru in a battle. Neither the identity of the enemy nor the circumstances of the battle are disclosed in the record. The situation of the inscription clearly shows that the country extending from Pedakal to Cuddapah was under the sway of Jaṭā Choḍa. Bhīma was far more illustrious than his father. His Kāñchīpuram inscription, though fragmentary, gives a good deal of interesting information about his career.[147] Bhīma is said to have come into conflict with Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III. Though the details of this conflict are not known, it is not unlikely that it arose out of Krishṇa's attempt to subjugate the Telugu-Choḍa principalities bordering on the kingdom of Vengī. The Telugu-Choḍa princes of Western Āndhra were also involved in it. A Kannaḍa epigraph at Maḍakasira in the Anantapur district, dated A.D. 948-49, records that a Rāshṭrakūṭa army under Kiriva Ponnayya together with the forces of Nolamba Pallava king Dilīparasa marched against Gajāṅkuśa Chola, and in a battle that took place at Ibīḷi Rāshṭrakūṭa general was killed.[148] Gajāṅkuśa was probably a member of the Pāmbulggi

144 Cp. 6 of 1935-36; *ARE*, 1935-36, part II, para 8.
145 238 of 1930-31.
146 303 of 1937-38.
147 237 of 1930-31; *EI*, XXI, 29-34; *JAHRS*, X, 16f.
148 728 of 1916, *SII*; IX, I, No. 25.

or Niḍugal branch. The outcome of the struggle is not known. Kṛishṇa appears to have ultimately succeeded; for, according to the *Śāntipurāṇa* of Ponna, Nāgamayya, the father of Mallapayya and Punnamayya, at whose instance Ponna composed the Purāṇa, was the governor of Kamma-nāḍu in the Veṅgī country.[149] It was also at this time that Kṛishṇa sent Bādapa and Tālapa, sons of Yuddhamalla II, with an army to Veṅgī to drive away the boy king Amma II and occupy the kingdom. The attempt was completely successful; for from Interu grant[150] we learn that Amma was expelled and Bādapa proclaimed himself king. It was probably to protect his interests that Nāgamayya was appointed as the protector of Kammanāḍu. Now, Bhīma could not have remained a disinterested spectator of the political changes in Veṅgī; for his sister was married to Amma II and he must have helped his brother-in-law to regain his kingdom, though nothing is known about his activities until after the death of Amma twenty-five years later.

Amma II's career was chequered. Though he managed to recover his kingdom from the sons of Yuddhamalla, he was obliged to seek refuge in Kaliṅga on account of Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa's invasion in A.D. 955. Amma's elder brother Dānārṇava obtained from Kṛishṇa sovereignty over Veṅgī which he could not maintain long; for his brother Amma soon returned from Kaliṅga and took possession of it. As Dānārṇava was not allowed to remain in the kingdom without molestation, he rose up in rebellion and, having put to death Amma II in battle, recaptured the throne in A.D. 970.

How Dānārṇava managed to slay Amma and ascend the throne is not known. It is not improbable that he secured help from his former allies, the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Kṛishṇa was no doubt dead by the time; but Khoṭṭiga, who succeeded him in 967, was still powerful; his authority was recognised in the south of Tuṅgabhadrā in 971[151] and it was not until the Paramāra attack on Malkhed in 972-73 that his real weakness was exposed. Now, the Western Gaṅga king Mārasiṁha II was the most powerful feudatory of the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom. He married the daughter of a king called Dānapa.[152] The only monarch who bore that name at this time was the Eastern Chālukya Dānārṇava who is also mentioned as Dānapeśa in the inscriptions. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Mārasiṁha II helped his father-in-law to slay Amma II and seize the throne. The fact that Dānār-

149 *Śāntipurāṇam*, I, 44.
150 Cf. 6 of 1938-39.
151 44 of 1904, *SII*, IX, i, 70.
152 *Ancient India*, No. 5.

ṇava's downfall and death synchronized with the final extinction of Rāshṭrakūṭa power may point to some connection between the fortunes of Dānārṇava and of the last Rāshṭrakūṭa kings.

It is remarkable that Choḍa Bhīma emerges into limelight during the period of the political revolution in which Taila II overthrew Rāshṭrakūṭa power, and that though he and Taila were ruling adjacent territories, there is no evidence of hostility between them. Further, they had a common enemy in Chola Rājarāja I who gave shelter to the children of Dānārṇava in their exile and fought a relentless war against the Chālukyas. These facts are significant; they were not perhaps due to mere accident.

Before attacking Dānārṇava in Veṅgī, Bhīma apparently made himself master of Pākānāḍu which had passed under the Vaidumbas who were the friends of Kṛishṇa III; the Vaidumba Bhuvana Triṇetra (accession A.D. 972), who claims to rule from Pottapi,[153] was thus tarred with the same brush as Dānārṇava and the first victim of Bhīma's plans of revenge.

Bhīma's invasion of Veṅgī was completely successful. Though the details of the campaign are not known, there is no room for doubt about the ultimate result. Dānārṇava was killed in battle; his family took to flight; and Bhīma's authority was firmly established in Veṅgī. The conquest of Veṅgī was soon followed by the invasion of the hilly region known as Agency Tracts at present. After some hard fighting the Manne chiefs who held sway over it were forced to submit. This naturally led to the conquest of Kaliṅga which was then ruled by the Eastern Gaṅga king Kāmārṇava. Bhīma's invasion took place either in 978 or the preceding year. Kāmārṇava was killed in battle; but his younger brother Vinayāditya who succeeded him continued the struggle for three more years until he also fell on the battle-field in 981. Thus it took four or five years for Bhīma to complete the conquest of Kaliṅga.

Bhīma ruled over Veṅgī for twenty-seven years. Though he was engaged in wars in Kaliṅga and elsewhere in the early part of his rule, Veṅgī itself was free from trouble. There was absolute peace within the kingdom, and his subjects remained contented. But trouble was brewing abroad. The sons of Dānārṇava, Śakti-varman I and Vimalāditya, sought refuge at the Chola court in Tanjore. Rājarāja I received them kindly and espoused their cause. He gave his daughter Kundavvai in marriage to Vimalāditya, the younger of the two brothers, and sent the elder Śakti-varman with an army under the command of Rājendra against Veṅgī. Though the conquest of

153 325 of 1905 (*SII*, X, 636), cp. 7 of 1935-36.

Veṅgī is referred to for the first time in the Chola inscriptions dated in the 14th regnal year of Rājarāja I, the Chola invasion perhaps began a little earlier. Choḍa Bhīma was a powerful monarch; he was further a veteran soldier and an experienced general. He was not likely to submit without a struggle. The inscriptions of Śakti-varman I indicate two or three definite stages in the war. As soon as Bhīma heard that the Chola force was coming, he sent an army under a famous warrior called Ekavīra to oppose its advance. He was, however, killed in battle. Next he sent another army under two of his lieutenants, Mahārāja and Baddema; but they also sustained defeat and were slain. Lastly, Śakti-varman encountered Bhīma in battle and destroyed him with the whole brood of Jaṭā Choḍa.[154] The death of Bhīma in battle is corroborated by the evidence of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates[155] in which it is stated that Rājarāja slew the invulnerable Andhra king (*arandhram-Andhram*) called Bhīma in fight. The death of Bhīma did not, as a matter of fact, take place in or before the 14th regnal year (A.D. 999) of Rājarāja I. The Eastern Chālukya and Chola inscriptions represent but one side of the medal. They seem to ignore an important episode in the war. The Cholas supporting Śakti-varman I doubtless inflicted defeat on Bhīma in two or three engagements and apparently compelled him to retire to Kaliṅga in the north of his dominions in A.D. 999. They restored Śakti-varman I to his ancestral throne, and returned to their kingdom. As soon as they withdrew, Bhīma evidently renewed the attack from Kaliṅga and drove Śakti-varman out of Veṅgī and boldly advanced on Kāñchī in Ś. 923 (A.D. 1001-2) and entered the city where he left a record of his arrival in the Rājasiṁheśvara temple. The triumph of Bhīma was only temporary; for soon afterwards a Chola army counter-attacked and marched as far as Kaliṅga, the base of Bhīma's operations. The conquest of Kaliṅgam is referred to in Rājarāja's 16th regnal year (A.D. 1001-2). It must have been during this invasion that Bhīma was killed. Thus ended the career of the greatest Andhra monarch of the tenth century.

Choḍa Bhīma's career was indeed remarkable. Scion of one of the numerous Telugu-Choda families, he rose by his own ability to the position of an independent monarch not only of the entire coast of the Telugu country over which the Eastern Chālukyas ruled in the palmy days of their power but also a large part of the Rāyalsīma where Eastern Chālukya power was never recognised. He had the dis-

154 *ITA*, II, 409, cp. 15 of 1917-18, *The Eastern Chālukyas of Veṅgi*, App. III, 311-15.

155 *SII*, III, 387-88, v, 82.

tinction of being the only prince of the Telugu-Choḍa families that ever attained the status of a sovereign ruler. With his death ended the independence of the Andhras. Veṅgī sank into the position of a Chola dependency, bound by the golden fetters of marriage alliances.

VIII. VAIDUMBAS

The only known copper-plate of the Vaidumbas[156] depicts a *liṅga* with the Nandi in front, and Nandi was their emblem. Their origin is obscure. They do not put forth any long pedigree like most of the other dynasties, their *praśasti* only comprising a statement that their chests bore the marks of victory won in many battle-fields. Their earliest records occur in the Madanapalle *tāluk*, and they might have been related to the family of the Poṛis who figure earlier in the same area and from whom Puṇyakumāra chose his queen Vasanta Poṛi Cholamahādevī. They declared their independence when the Telugu-Choḍa power declined and established their capital at Vaidumbavrolu and captured Chippili in the neighbourhood. Under Gaṇḍa Saṅkili (*c.* A.D. 800) they came into conflict with the Telugu-Choḍas; beginning in some border skirmishes,[157] their hostility soon grew into a chronic antagonism which under Gaṇḍa Triṇetra Vīra Mahārāja culminated in the battle of Soremaḍi (A.D. 825). After that battle he occupied Rénāḍu, and thus became the neighbour of the Nolambas.[158] Vaidumba records occur generally in the southern part of Rénāḍu in the Chittoor district, though one at Animela[159] takes us to the heart of Rénāḍu. Parts of Rénāḍu and Siddhi 1000 continued to be under Telugu-Choḍa rule, as evidenced by Śrīkaṇṭa's grant (A.D. 850) in the south-east corner of Cuddapah. The final subjugation of Vaidumbas and the destruction of their principality was effected by Chola Parāntaka about 912. Afterwards, the surviving Vaidumbas became the friends and feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas under Kṛishṇa III. After Kṛishṇa's death they aspired to an independent status once more, and about 972 Bhuvana Triṇetra celebrated his coronation and even occupied Pottapi-nāḍu, taking it from the Choḍas.[160] In Rénāḍu he was succeeded by Irigāva Mahārāja in 976.[161]

156 Cop. 7 of 1935-36.
157 300 and 301 of 1922.
158 *EC*, X. Bg. 62.
159 191 of 1937-38.
160 325 of 1905: c.p. 7 of 1935-36.
161 196 of 1937-38.

IX. NOLAMBAS

Maṅgala Nolambādhirāja of the family of the Pallavas of Kāñchī is said to have defeated a Kirāta in battle and founded the family of the Nolambas; he worshipped goddess Chaṇḍikā and earned praise from the *Karṇāṭas*, we do not know how. His son and successor was Siṅgapota Kali-Nolambādhirāja, feudatory of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda II[162] (772-79) and contemporary of Rājādityarasa of Banavāsi and Chitravāhana II of Āḷuvakheḍa 6000. He took part in quelling the insurrection of Duggamāra against the Gaṅga king who was his friend. The Gaṅga king was most probably Śrīpurusha or Śivamāra II.[163] The earliest settlement of the Nolambas was in the modern Challakere *tāluk* of the Chitaldrug district on the border between Rāshṭrakūṭa and Gaṅga territories, and this area came to be known as Nolambalige 1000. From there they expanded eastward and south-eastward into Telugu-Choḍa territory under Parameśvara Pallavādhirāja Chāruponnera, son and successor of Siṅgapota. Inscriptions of the time of Govinda II[164] bear evidence of Chāruponnera's rule with his son Pallavamalla in Nolambalige 1000, Iṛigalvāḍi 300, Gaṅgavūr 30 and other places. Iṛigalvāḍi was definitely a Telugu-Choḍa possession, and its occupation by the Nolambas produced the migration of the Telugu-Choḍas to other areas. About A.D. 800 the Pennār became the boundary between the Nolamba and the Telugu-Choḍa territories,[165] and apparently from this time to the battle of Soremaḍi (825) friendly relations subsisted between the two powers. After that battle, the relations between Poḷalchoḷa and Gaṅga Rājamalla on one side and the Bāṇas on the other have been traced in the section on the Bāṇas. The gain of Gaṅgaṟusāsira was followed by the battle of Murggepāḍi in the Kolār district which laid the Bāṇa power low for a time. A war with the Vaidumba led to the capture of the part of Rénāḍu they had held till then.[166] Under Rājamalla's successor, Nītimārga, Poḷalchoḷa seems to have become master for a time of all the country up to Kāñchī.[167] He was also known as Maṅgi and was killed in battle by the Eastern Chālukya Guṇaga Vijayāditya III. It is not quite clear whether Guṇaga acted on behalf of the Telugu-Choḍas, or what is more probable, as the feudatory of Amoghavarsha I in pursuit of Rāshṭrakūṭa hostilities against Nītimārga after the recall of Baṅkeśa necessitated by rebellions near the capital of Amoghavarsha. If Guṇaga had championed

162 *EC*, VI. Sr. 180.
163 *EC*, VI. Sr. 180.
164 *EC*, XI. Cl. 34.
165 *EC*, X. Sp. 30.
166 314 of 1922.
167 588 of 1912.

the Telugu-Choḍas, they got no great good out of it. For Mahendra, the son and successor of Polalchola, destroyed the Telugu-Choḍas root and branch (A.D. 878).[168]

The fall of Maṅgi led to the temporary recovery of the Vaidumbas and Bāṇas.[169] But all alike soon felt the weight of Rāshṭrakūṭa arms under Kṛishṇa II (*c.* A.D. 900) though their submergence was only temporary.[170] They recovered a few years later but only to become the instruments of Rāshṭrakūṭa aggression against Chola Parāntaka I. The Nolamba country as a separate unit was extinguished by the conquest of Nolambavāḍi by Chola Rājarāja I.

X. THE CHOLAS

After the close of the Saṅgam Age, the history of the Cholas, like that of the Tamil land as a whole, becomes obscure. While the Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas emerge into light towards the end of the sixth century A.D., the Cholas do not re-enter the stage till the middle of the ninth. So for a period of well over five hundred years (300-850) the Cholas led a submerged existence. Their presence in the land of the Kāverī is, however, attested by a number of literary and epigraphical references.

There is good reason to hold that the semi-legendary Chola monarch Śeṅgaṇān (Red-eyed one) belonged to the early part of this long period. His name is counted among the mythical ancestors of the imperial Cholas of the Vijayālaya line in their charters, and in hagiology he figures as a *nāyanār* (Śaiva devotee) who, as a spider in a previous birth, had been the rival of an elephant in the worship of Śiva at Tiruvānaikkāval (the elephant-guarded shrine) on the island of Śrīraṅgam. As the result of his devotion, he gained birth in the Chola royal family and became the son of Śubhadeva and Kamalavatī, names otherwise unknown. Śeṅgaṇān built many temples of Śiva, including one at Tiruvānaikkāval; he also covered with gold the roof of the famous shrine of Naṭarāja at Chidambaram and built houses for the use of the Brahmin priests of that shrine. So far the *Periya-purāṇam* of Śekkilār (twelfth century). The famous Śaiva saints, Appar and Sambandar, in their Devāram hymns, mark out several temples as among those erected by Śeṅgaṇān, and refer to his having been a spider in a former birth. The Vaishṇava saint Tirumaṅgai devotes one of his several hymns on Tirunaraiyur[171] to the works of Śeṅgaṇān, and says that he built 'seventy beautiful

168 129 of 1899, *EC.* XII Si. 38.
169 298 of 1905, 191 of 1937-38, 306 of 1935-36; *EI*, XXIV. p. 186.
170 *MAR*. 1910 para 79; *EC*, XI, Jl. 19.
171 *Periya Tirumoli*, 6. 6.

temples to the Lord (*Īśa*) of eight arms'. According to the hymn, Śeṅgaṇān was victorious in the battles of Veṇṇi and Alundūr, and despatched the Vél of Vilandai to heaven. The king is called the lord of the Kāverī region, the southern Tamil (i.e. Pāṇḍya), and the king of the northern quarter, besides being also the lord of the west. There is thus no doubt that Śeṅgaṇān was revered as a great devotee and warrior in the seventh century. He was perhaps a prominent Chola king of the fourth or early fifth century, who expanded his dominion by conquests in the south, west and north, and by the temples he erected earned for himself a great reputation as a devotee of Śiva and a place in the Śaiva calendar of saints. His son Nalladikkon is mentioned in the Anbil plates.[172] But the correctness of the statement is open to doubt, as he is not mentioned in other Chola grants, and a Nalladi figures in an early poem of Paraṇar as lord of Vallam, near Tanjore.[173]

Another Chola monarch of the dark period was Pugal Chola who ruled from Uṛaiyūr, honoured Śaiva devotees and waged successful war against Adigaimān of Tagaḍūr (Dharmapuri in Salem district). He is said to have sought death on a pyre when he discovered that a Śaiva devotee had been killed in his war with Tagaḍūr. When a certain Kūṛṛuvan, chief of Kalandai, afterwards recognized as a *nāyanār*, wanted the Brahmins of Chidambaram to put the diadem on his head in the usual form, they declined to do so on the plea that they would crown only monarchs of the Chola line and preferred exile in the Chera country to complying with the wishes of the upstart chieftain. But God Śiva appeared to Kūṛṛavan in a dream and crowned him by planting the divine feet on his head, which is his claim to be reckoned a *nāyanār*. A Chola king is said to have presided at the debate in Tiruvārūr between Daṇḍi-aḍigal, a Śaiva saint, and the Jains who lost in the contest and had to quit the city. It was again a Chola who enabled Appar to end his fast by finding the image of Śiva at Paḷaiyāṛai near Kumbakonam when the Jains had hidden it away from him. To the same period belongs the Chola monarch whose daughter Maṅgayarkkaraśi (queen among women) became the queen of the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Sambandar and persuaded her husband to abandon Jainism in favour of Śaivism. Other Chola kings of the time are mentioned in the *Periyapurāṇam*, but they belong more to religious than political history, and there is no means of determining the exact period of their rule or their mutual relations. Likewise the *Divyasūri-Charita* and the

172 *EI*, XV, 60, V, 13.

173 *Aham* 356. It is also doubtful if the *kaḷavaḷi* refers to Śeṅgaṇān at all as has been thought till now. Cf. Ch. II 17 ante and Ch. XXX below.

Guruparamparā tell the same tale from the Vaishṇava side. Devadevī, the hetaera who captivated *āḷvār* Toṇḍar-aḍip-poḍi (Bhaktāṅghri-reṇu) for a time, met the holy man first when she was returning from the court of the Chola king at Uṛaiyūr. The celebrated Uṛaiyūr-nāchchiyār who declined to marry a mortal and insisted successfully on her union with Lord Raṅganātha of Śrīraṅgam, was a Chola princess, the daughter of Dharmavarmā of the solar line of Uṛaiyūr. Tirumaṅgai-āḷvār is said to have started life as an officer in the Chola army. Possibly some of these literary references were merely due to the fact that the works in which they occur were composed in the days of Chola ascendancy. Nevertheless, these repeated references to Cholas in the literary traditions of Śaivism and Vaishṇavism may be accepted as proof that even in the period of their political obscurity, the Chola rulers lent their support to the Hindu revival that resulted in the practical extinction of Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamil country.

The main thing about the Cholas in this period, however, is that they ceased to be a great power, and scions of the dynasty sought service under the Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas when these came up again at the close of the sixth century. They seem, however, never to have completely lost hold of their ancient capital Uṛaiyūr near Trichinopoly. Vijayālaya rises into prominence from the same neighbourhood and the various branches of the Telugu-Choḍas glory in the names of Uṛaiyūr and Kāverī besides that of Karikāla, and as we shall see, epigraphy confirms this impression. The incidents of the Kalabhra interregnum, and the rule of Achchuta of the Kalabhra-kula in the Chola country have been mentioned already, and the rise and progress of the Telugu-Choḍas have been traced in another section. Epigraphical references to the Cholas do not begin till we reach the charters of the Siṁhavishṇu line. The Velūrpālaiyam plates describe Buddhavarmā of the fifth century as the submarine fire to the ocean of the Chola army.[174] Siṁhavishṇu (*c.* A.D. 600) is said to have seized the Chola country watered by the Kāverī and adorned by groves of areca palms and by rich paddy fields.[175] Mahendra-varman I (600-30), the son of Siṁhavishṇu, gloried in his sway over the Chola country; in his inscriptions the Trichinopoly rock is called the crown of the Chola country, and Lord Śiva is said to have enjoined the king to build a temple for him on the rock to enable him to have a constant view of the rich splendour of the Chola land.[176] The Kūram grant of Parameśvara-varman I includes the Chola among countries conquered by him.[177] The Aihole inscription of Pulakeśin II (634)

174 *SII*, II, 508, l. 14.
175 *Ibid.* ll, 16-17.
176 *SII*, I, 33, 34.
177 *Ibid*, 151; ll. 14-15.

states that he confined the power of the Pallavas inside the four walls of Kāñchīpuram and thus brought prosperity to the Chola, Kerala and Pāṇḍya.[178] Vikramāditya I, the son and successor of Pulakeśin II, also claims conquest of the Chola country, and his Godvāl plates (674) mention his victorious camp in the ancient Chola capital Uṛaiyūr on the southern bank of the Kāverī.[179] The Velvikuḍi grant says that the Pāṇḍya Kochchaḍaiyan Raṇadhīra (710-40) assumed the title Seṁbiyan, among others, thus implying that a part of the traditional Chola country acknowledged his sway. The Trichinopoly inscription of Māṛañjaḍaiyan[180] calls him the *tilaka* of two dynasties, the lunar and the solar, i.e. Pāṇḍya and Chola respectively. The Cholas are counted by the Śinnamanūr plates among the allies of the Pallavas who sustained a defeat near Kumbakonam at the hands of Śrī Vallabha (A.D. 815-62).

A continuous history of the Cholas becomes possible with the rise of Vijayālaya (Abode of Victory) about the middle of the ninth century. The chronology of the period depends on astronomical data furnished by contemporary inscriptions, particularly those of Āditya I and Parāntaka I, the son and grandson, respectively, of Vijayālaya.[181] The reign of Vijayālaya in the neighbourhood of Uṛaiyūr and the extent of his territory are attested by references in inscriptions of a later time. A record from Tiruneḍuṅgulam[182] in the Trichinopoly *tāluk* refers to a gift of land made in accordance with an earlier charter of Parakesarivarman Śrī Vijayālaya Choladeva. A Vijayālaya-chaturvedimaṅgalam is mentioned among the *brahmadeya* villages which were required to supply men for service in the Tanjore temple in the reign of Rājarāja I.[183] A *kalveṭṭu* (stone inscription) of the fourth year of Vijayālaya is mentioned in an inscription of Vikrama Chola from North Arcot.[184] A Pāṇḍya inscription of the thirteenth century mentions the Vijayālaya-choleśvara temple at Nārttāmalai in Pudukkoṭṭai;[185] the temple, which survives to this day after a renovation, is a gem of early Chola architecture. The Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates[186] quaintly affirm that Vijayālaya caught hold of Tanjore for

178 *EI*, VI. 6; vv, 29-31.
179 *EI*, X. 103.
180 *ASIAR*, 1903-4, p. 275.
181 *EI*, VIII, 260, and XIX, No. 12.
182 675 of 1909.
183 *SII*, II, 69, para 139.
184 164 of 1915.
185 *PSI*, 282.
186 *SII*, *III*, No. 205; vv. 45-46. Possibly there is a reference to Vijayālaya's charities at Kāñchi in ll 28-29 of the Madras Museum plates of Uttama Chola (*SII*, III, 267 and *n.* 2.)

his pleasure as if the city were his lawful spouse, and that he founded a temple of goddess Niśumbhasūdinī (Durgā) in the city; in the Kanyākumārī inscription of Vīrarājendra, Vijayālaya is said to have founded Tanjore.[187] A stone inscription from Vīracholapuram in Tirukkoyilūr *tāluk* of South Arcot is dated in the third regnal year of 'Parakesari who captured Tanjore,'[188] clearly a record of Vijayālaya's time and the only one giving the title which settles the identity of the king. Another from Kāppalur, fifty miles farther north, dated in the eighth year of Parakesari, may also be assigned to Vijayālaya with good reason.[189] The duration of Vijayālaya's reign is uncertain, and his rise can only be conjecturally dated about A.D. 850.[190] The Pallavas were still powerful, and Vijayālaya must have been a vassal under them. The facts that he dated records in his own regnal years and that he conquered Tanjore and based his *biruda* on that conquest show the growing importance of the vassal and the relative decline of the suzerain's power. He was encouraged to conquer Tanjore because it was held by the Muttaraiyar, a line of chieftains who held parts of Tanjore, Trichinopoly and Pudukkoṭṭai, and ranged themselves on the side of the Pāṇḍyas in their struggle with the Pallavas. Vijayālaya by turning against them at once gained credit for his loyal service to his suzerain, and took the first steps towards the expansion of Chola dominion, though Vijayālaya himself could have hardly dreamt that his successes were to be the beginnings of one of the most splendid empires known in India's history. It is clear that he did not stop with the conquest of Tanjore, but made his influence felt over a much wider area, and that the Pallava rulers, hard pressed by the Pāṇḍyas and other enemies, had neither the will nor the ability to restrain the activities of their mighty vassal.

Vijayālaya was succeeded by his son Āditya I about A.D. 870-71. He was a *Rājakesari*, a title which was borne alternately with *Parakesari* by successive Chola sovereigns. Like his father, Āditya continued to serve his Pallava suzerain and further his own interests at the same time. When the Pāṇḍya king Varaguṇa II threw off his enforced allegiance to Nṛipatuṅga and invaded the Pallava territory, Āditya seems to have inflicted a defeat on the invader at Iḍavai on the north bank of the Kāverī in the Chola country, and his achievement was commemorated as already noticed in the alternative name of the village Pāṇḍiyanai-venkaṇḍā-śola-Chaturvedimaṅgalam i.e. the Brahmin village established by the Chola who saw the back of the Pāṇḍya

187 *TAS*, III, 142; v, 54.
188 51 of 1936.
189 283 of 1938-39.
190 *Colas*, I, 132.

king.[191] Āditya must have also played a prominent part on the Pallava side in the decisive battle of Śrī Purambiyam (A.D. 880). Unlike Gaṅga Pṛithivīpati I, the other ally of the Pallava Aparājita who lost his life in the field after securing victory for Aparājita, the Chola Āditya lived to reap the full benefits of the victory. In fact the Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas were both exhausted by their long-drawn wars, and the time had come for the Cholas to come out and fill the political void that was being created. Āditya was not slow to seize the occasion. He quickly made up his mind to overthrow his nominal suzerain and annex his country to his own growing kingdom. The evidence bearing on the termination of the Pallava power about A.D. 891 has already been cited (p. 342). The result of Āditya's victory was that the Cholas took the place of the Pallavas, as the neighbours of the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the south-east.

Āditya's political achievements were not confined to the conquest of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. Either the Gaṅga Pṛithivīpati II assisted Āditya in the overthrow of the Pallava Aparājita, or that achievement of Āditya led to the recognition of his suzerainty by the Gaṅga ruler. Pritipatiyār, son of Māramaraiyar, who is no other than Pṛithivīpati II, presented a silver vessel (*kendi*) to the temple of Takkolam in the twenty-fourth year of Rājakesari (Āditya I).[192] *The koṅgadeśa-rājākkal* affirms that Āditya, after being crowned at Tañjāvūr, came to Koṅgadeśa, conquered the Veḍa (hunter) kings, captured Talakāḍ, and ruled over his new conquests, founding many new tax-free *agrahāras* there.[193] Despite the late date and the unrealiable character of this chronicle, this statement looks probable. The records of Parāntaka I, son of Āditya, are found in Koṅgadeśa and he does not claim to have conquered the country himself; an inscription of the tenth year of the king mentions his agent in Koṅgu for the supervision of temples in that country.[194] It is therefore quite reasonable to suppose that Āditya conquered Koṅgu. The mention of Talakāḍ implies that Āditya occupied at least a part of the Western Gaṅga country on the upper course of the Kāverī, a supposition which finds support in the statement of the Anbil plates[195] that Āditya constructed Śiva temples on both the banks of the Kāverī throughout its course from the Sahyādri mountain to the wide ocean. Pṛithivīpati II of the collateral branch was already a feudatory of the Chola. But there is no evidence that the main line acknowledged Chola suzerainty at this time. The Pāṇḍya Parāntaka Vīranārāyaṇa claims to have

191 690 of 1905; and 42 of 1914; p. 350 *ante*.
192 *EI*, XIX, No. 12 (5 of 1897).
193 *Madras Govt Or. Series*, VI, 10.
194 258 of 1907. *ARE* gives the date of the record as year 30 which is a mistake.
195 *EI*, XV, pp. V 18.

fought in Koṅgu about the same time as Āditya's conquest of the country, and this may well be a reference to his failure to defend that part of his empire.

Āditya was on friendly terms with his Chera contemporary Sthāṇu Ravi. The two kings together conferred on Vikki-Aṇṇan, the husband of a Kaḍamba-mādevī, the personal privileges of 'throne, *chauri*, palanquin, drum, a palace, *ponakam* (*lit.* food), bugle, and elephant-corps, and the hereditary title of Śembiyan Tamiḷavel.[196] He was perhaps a Chera general who had, at the instance of his master, co-operated with Āditya in his Koṅgu campaign against the Pāṇḍya. Āditya's son Parāntaka married a Chera princess. A Vikki-Aṇṇa is mentioned in the Gaṅga records of the time as the son of Pṛithivīpati II;[197] it is not clear if the two were identical. Āditya himself had for his chief queen (*mūtta deviyār*) a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess, Ilaṅgon Pichchi, a daughter of Krishṇa II, by whom he had a son Kannaradeva.[198]

Āditya I died at Toṇḍaimānāḍ near Kālahasti in Chittoor district and his son Parāntaka I built a temple over his remains, known as Kodaṇḍarāmeśvara or Ādityeśvara, and provided for a thousand persons of all religious sects being fed there on certain festival days.[199]

Parāntaka's accession has been fixed by Kielhorn between 15 January and 25 July, A.D. 907. The Chola kingdom then comprised the whole country between the Kāverī in the south and Madras and Kālahasti in the north, and included some tracts to the south of the Kāverī and parts of the Mysore plateau. Parāntaka continued to rule till 955, as his latest inscription bears a date in his forty-eighth year,[200] but his records become rare towards the close of the reign. He enjoyed success and prosperity for the best part of his reign. As a young prince, he took an active part in his father's campaigns, particularly those against the Pallavas. He extended his kingdom to Cape Comorin in the south and even invaded Ceylon. In the north he extended his sway up to Nellore and displaced the Bāṇas and Vaidumbas, favouring his loyal Gaṅga feudatory Pṛithivīpati II Hastimalla. But he found the Rāshṭrakūṭa his inveterate foes, and though he repulsed an invasion of Krishṇa II fairly early in his reign, his defences failed, and disaster overtook his realm when Krishṇa III invaded it (*c.* 948). The Chola empire did not fully recover from the shock till the accession of Rājarāja I in A.D. 985.

Parāntaka appears to have come to the throne in the midst of a

196 286 of 1911.
197 332 of 1912.
198 14 of 1920 and 38 of 1895 (*SII*, V, 595); *EI*, XXVI, 112-14.
199 286 of 1906; 230 of 1903.
200 200 of 1932.

war begun by Āditya against the Pāṇḍya. The title Madurai-koṇḍa (Captor of Madurai) occurs in Parāntaka's inscriptions from 910. The process of conquest and subjugation must, however, have been long and difficult, and his inscriptions actually appear in the Pāṇḍyan country only many years later, about 930-31. The Pāṇḍya ruler who faced the invasion and lost his kingdom was Rājasiṁha II. When he suffered defeat in the war at the hands of Parāntaka, the Pāṇḍya appealed for aid to Kassapa V (908-18) of Ceylon,[201] who equipped and sent a large force under the general Sakkasenāpati, at the sight of which Rājasiṁha exclaimed: 'I will join all Jambudīpa under one umbrella'. But his high hopes were dashed to the ground on the field of Veḷḷūr (918). According to the Udayendiram plates of Pṛithivīpati II, the army of Parāntaka won an easy victory against the combined Pāṇḍyan and Ceylonese forces; a herd of elephants was part of the victor's booty, and he commemorated his success by assuming the title Saṅgrāma-Rāghava, Rāma in battle (against Laṅkā). The further attempt of the Ceylonese troops to rally for another engagement was hampered by a plague (*upasagga*) which killed Sakkasenāpati and decimated his troops. Kassapa had to withdraw his army 'out of pity' and leave Rājasiṁha to his own devices. The battle of Veḷḷūr thus turned out to be decisive, and paved the way for the Chola conquest and annexation of the southern kingdom. The unlucky Rājasiṁha fled to Ceylon with the royal insignia and whatever treasure he could carry. King Dappula V, who had succeeded Kassapa there, was willing to help the refugee monarch, but in the words of the Ceylonese chronicle,[202] 'the nobles dwelling on the island for some reason or other stirred up a sorry strife to the undoing of the Pāṇḍu king. The Pāṇḍu king thought his sojourn here was of no use to him. He left his diadem and other valuables behind and betook himself to the Keralas'. Kerala was the home of Rājasiṁha's mother Vānavanmahādevī; but being on friendly terms with the Cholas, the ruler of Kerala was in no position to further the cause of the fallen Pāṇḍya. Parāntaka spent some years fighting in the Pāṇḍya country, and at the end of the conquest he thought of a formal coronation for himself at the Pāṇḍyan capital. But the royal insignia had been taken away by Rājasiṁha and deposited in Ceylon, and Parāntaka failed in his attempt to get them back. The occurrence is recorded in the Ceylonese chronicle under the reign of Udaya IV (942-50).[203] When the Chola king sent mes-

201 *CV*, Ch. 52, vv, 70 ff; also *SI*, II, No. 76; vv, 9-11. The date of this king is given as 914-23 in the *History of Ceylon* published by the University of Ceylon (Editor).

202 *CV*, Ch. 53, pp. vv, 5 ff.

203 *Ibid*, pp. vv, 428. The date of this king is given as 946-54 in the *History of Ceylon* published by the University of Ceylon (Editor).

sages demanding the restitution of the Pāṇḍyan diadem and other regalia, Udaya 'did not give them up. So the mighty Chola equipped an army and sent it to fetch them by force.' A battle ended in victory for the invading Chola army and the death of the Sinhalese commander. Then Udaya 'took the crown and the rest and betook himself to Rohaṇa. The Chola troops marched thither, but finding no way of entering Rohaṇa (the hilly south-eastern part of Ceylon), they turned and betook themselves through fear back to their own country.'

In his Pāṇḍyan campaign Parāntaka was ably assisted by his subordinates of whom particular mention must be made of the Paluveṭṭaraiyar chief Kaṇḍan Amudanār of Koḍumbāḷūr (Trichinopoly district) whose heroism on the field of Veḷḷūr was commemorated by special endowments in the temple of Kīḻappaluvūr.[204] Then there were the Vēḷir chieftains of Koḍumbāḷūr (Pudukkoṭṭai) who had dynastic alliances with the Chola family. Arikulakesari, one of Parāntaka's sons, married Pūdi Ādichcha Piḍāri, daughter of Tennavan Ilaṅgoveḷār of Koḍumbāḷūr. There were other alliances as well.[205] And the Koḍumbāḷūr chieftains had been the enemies of the Pāṇḍya for some time as the Sinnamanūr plates state that Rājasiṁha had fought at Koḍumbāḷūr before the Chola invasion of his country.

While Parāntaka was engaged in the Pāṇḍya war, possibly in the interval between his first and second invasion of the Pāṇḍya country, he had to encounter another enemy from the north. By the accession of Parāntaka, his half-brother Kannaradeva was kept out of the Chola throne, and Kannara's grandfather, the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II, took up the cause of the excluded prince, who, as the son of the senior queen of Āditya I, had perhaps the better claim, at least as his grandfather thought. Kṛishṇa II planned an invasion of the Chola kingdom, evidently with a view to dethrone Parāntaka and secure the Chola throne for Kannara. His Bāṇa feudatory Vikramāditya II also joined the expedition. The decisive engagement occurred at Vāllāla, Tiruvallam in North Arcot district. Pṛithivīpati II greatly distinguished himself in the battle. Kṛishṇa and his allies were totally defeated. The Bāṇas were driven out of their territory, Perumbāṇappāḍi, which they had ruled for two centuries and was now handed over to Pṛithivīpati II with the title Bāṇādhirāja[206] some time before 916, the date of the Sholingur rock inscription. Parāntaka commemorated his victory against Kṛishṇa II by assuming

204 231 of 1926.

205 *SII*, III. 96. Also *ARE*, 1908. II, 84 ff.

206 Sholingur rock inscr. *EI*., IV, 221-25; Udayendiram pl., *SII*, II. No. 70 v; 9 Also *EI*, XXVI, 113 and 233.

the title Vīra-Chola[207] Hostilities with the Bāṇas seem to have continued. Parāntaka uprooted two Bāṇa kings, doubtless Vikramāditya II and his son Vijayāditya III, and conquered the Vaidumbas. The dispossessed rulers fled to the Rāshṭrakūṭa court, and they had no small share in inciting Kṛishṇa III to undertake his southern adventure which wrought havoc on Parāntaka's empire and also weakened the Rāshṭrakūṭa power.

A glimpse into a Chola campaign in the Nellore district is afforded by two inscriptions from Tiruvoṛṛiyūr, a northern suburb of Madras.[208] An officer of Parāntaka, Māṛan Parameśvaran, overran Śīṭpuli and destroyed Nellūr, and on his return to the south, he stopped at Tiruvoṛṛiyūr to make a thanks-offering to Mahādeva (A.D. 941)—a grant of land which was made tax-free four years later. This campaign was evidently directed against a Telugu chieftain whose identity is not now easy to decide. Śīṭpuli was the name of a district in the southern part of the Eastern Chālukya kingdom.[209] The campaign had, however, no permanent results, and no records of Parāntaka have been found in the east coast region to the north of Tiruvoṛṛiyūr.

The rapid progress of the Chola power under Parāntaka roused the jealousy of the neighbouring powers, and he began to experience increasing difficulty in defending his empire on all its frontiers. The repulse he had in Ceylon about 945 has already been mentioned. He had to acquiesce in it because of occurrences elsewhere. The death of Pṛithivīpati II (940) removed Parāntaka's watch-dog on the north-west frontier. Pṛithivīpati left behind no son of equal competence, Vikki-Aṇṇa having predeceased him.[210] In the main line of Gaṅgas Būtuga II, who had married the sister of Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III and assisted him in securing his throne from a usurper, was now left in unquestioned power because he had murdered his elder brother Rājamalla and annexed his possessions also. The Bāṇas and Vaidumbas were in their turn pressing Kṛishṇa to avenge their losses. Kṛishṇa himself was in the prime of life, and by no means disinclined to undertake any enterprise that would bring him glory.

These developments were possibly foreshadowed even during the life-time of Pṛithivīpati II and before Kṛishṇa's accession to the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne. A cattle-raid in 936 by a Western Gaṅga king, commemorated by an incribed hero-stone in Kīḻ-Muttugūr in North Arcot district,[211] was the first indication of the gathering storm.

207 Kanyākumārī inscr, V, 58.
208 160 (*SII*, III, 108) and 236 of 1912.
209 70 of 1921.
210 322 of 1912.
211 *EI*, IV, 178-79.

Parāntaka realized the situation and posted his eldest son Rājāditya with a large army, including an elephant corps and some cavalry, in Tirumunaippāḍi-nāḍu, the hilly country of South and North Arcot districts, where Rājāditya resided for some years at Grāmam, also called Rājādittapuram.[212] We also find another son of Parāntaka, by name Arikulakesari, in the same region about the same time, doubtless assisting his elder brother Rājāditya.[213] Parāntaka was thus not unmindful of the repercussions of his aggressive policy, and while expecting much of Pṛithivīpati II, made his own preparations against an emergency.

The main incidents of Kṛishṇa's invasion of the Chola kingdom are to be gathered from two inscriptions. One from Solapuram[214] is dated in Śaka 871 (A.D. 949), the year in which Kannaradeva Vallabha entered Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam after the overthrow of Rājāditya. The Ātakūr inscription[215] of Būtuga II is the other important record. It states that the battle of Takkolam was fought in the current Śaka year 872, i.e. A.D. 949-50 and that Būtuga himself killed Rājāditya in that battle. Parāntaka's inscriptions from the South and North Arcot districts bear dates only up to A.D. 948, and no inscriptions whatever of his reign are known to bear his regnal years 42 to 44 inclusive, a fact clearly pointing to some great disaster in the period 949-51. Thus all lines of evidence go to show that A.D. 949 was the crucial year. Kṛishṇa III and his brother-in-law Būtuga invaded the Chola empire from the north-west, and the decisive battle was fought at Takkolam, six miles to the south-east of Arkoṇam, a railway junction in North Arcot. The Ātakūr inscription states that Kannaradeva 'was making a display of triumph after fighting against and killing the Mūvaḍi-Chola-Rājāditva at a place called Takkola;' it adds: 'when Kannaradeva was fighting the Chola, Būtuga made the *howdāh* the battle-field, and aimed at, pierced, and killed Rājāditya'—an achievement for which Kṛishṇa rewarded him with the districts of Banavase 12,000 and Belvole 300. This account is confirmed on the Chola side by a verse in the larger Leyden grant:[216] 'The heroic Rājāditya, the ornament of the solar race, having shaken in battle the unshakable Kṛishṇarāja with his forces, by means of his sharp arrows flying in all directions, was himself pierced in his heart by the sharp arrows of the enemy, and (thus) winning the praise of the three worlds, he ascended to the heaven of heroes in a tall *vimāna*'.

212 *ASIAR*, 1905-6, p. 181; 180 of 1921; 793 of 1905.
213 280 of 1902.
214 248 of 1902; *EI* VIII, 194.
215 *EI*, VI, 51.
216 *ASSI*, IV, 206-7; ll. 42-45; *EI*, xxii, 213-66.

The battle was hard-fought, and the Chola cause suffered disaster mainly on account of a well-aimed arrow of Būtuga having fatally wounded Rājāditya.

Even this decisive victory did not mean the collapse of all resistance to Kṛishṇa's advance. Inscriptions dated in his reign do not appear till 953, and become common only after 956.[217] Inscriptions in South Arcot between the years 952 and 954 mention names of minor chieftains who owe no allegiance either to the Chola or Rāshṭrakūṭa. Kṛishṇa in due course assumed the title *Kachchiyum-Tañjaiyum-koṇḍa,* captor of Kāñchī and Tanjore. From the spurious Sudi plates,[218] we learn that Būtuga, after Takkolam, assaulted Tanjore, Nalkote, and a number of other fortresses, and handed over to Kṛishṇa elephants, horses and a vast amount of treasure seized from these places. Kṛishṇa was still in his camp at Melpāḍi in 959, ten years after he invaded Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, distributing territory among his followers and constructing temples called Kāḷapriya, Gaṇḍamārtāṇḍa, Kṛishṇeśvara. The Karhad grant[219] which gives these details adds that Kṛishṇa extorted tributes from several kings, including the king of Ceylon, and erected a pillar of victory at Rāmeśvaram. We cannot decide if this is an empty boast or the record of a triumphant raid across the southern half of the Chola empire. No inscriptions of Kṛishṇa or of his vassals occur south of the latitude of Pondichéry. But the disaster that befell the Chola kingdom can hardly be exaggerated. The blow not only resulted in the loss of the northern possessions of Parāntaka, but loosened his hold on the south, and the Pāṇḍyas once again asserted their independence. The Chola empire ceased to exist; it had to be built up all over again.

Only a few inscriptions in the neighbourhood of Tanjore attest the closing years of Parāntaka's reign. These are dated in the forty-fifth and forty-sixth years of his reign. One record, bearing a date in the forty-eighth year, comes from distant Vanamāladinne in Punganur *tāluk* of the Chittoor district.[220] The suggestion has been put forward that Parāntaka lost his life in A.D. 953 in a Pāṇḍya war, falling a victim to Vīra Pāṇḍya who assumed the title *Śolan-talai-Koṇḍa,* 'who took the head of the Chola', and that the Chitoor record must have been dated in Parāntaka's reign owing to the ignorance of the king's death.[221] But *ṭalai-koṇḍa* does not necessarily involve decapitation, and may have involved only humble submission, the vanquished

217 375 of 1909 dated in Kṛishṇa's fifth year is spurious, *Colas,* I, 158.
218 *EI,* III, 179-80.
219 *EI,* IV, 280.
220 200 of 1932.
221 *EI,* XXV, 38.

ruler placing his head at the feet of the victor;[222] again Śolan need not mean the Chola king as any prince could be so described. And the Chittoor record may well be evidence that, for all the successes of Kṛishṇa, some remote parts of the Chola empire still continued loyal to Parāntaka and that the invader had not fully mastered the country. We have in fact no evidence on the manner of Parāntaka's death. He had many wives, the names of no fewer than eleven occurring in the inscriptions. Kokkilān was the mother of Rājāditya. A Kerala princess was the mother of Ariñjaya; her marriage, which took place when Āditya I was alive, apparently furnished the occasion for a large influx of Malayālis into the Chola country in search of service under the king and his sons. Vellaṅgumaran, the Kerala general of Rājāditya,[223] built a temple in Grāmam and was the leading example of a large class of less-known immigrants figuring as donors of small charitable gifts in the inscriptions of the time. Besides Rājāditya, Parāntaka had at least three other sons; Gaṇḍarāditya, Uttamaśīli, and Arikulakesari, Arindigai or Ariñjaya. One daughter, Vīramādévi, called queen of Govinda Vallavarayar,[224] was perhaps the queen of Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda IV; another, Anupamā, was married to the chieftain of Koḍuṁbālūr. Parāntaka performed several *hiraṇyagarbhas* and *tulābhāras* and gave many *brahmadeyas*. He was a Śaiva and covered with gold the Śiva temple of Chidambaram. His reign was a great epoch in temple architecture and in the progressive organisation of rural self-government. The two celebrated inscriptions[225] of Uttaramerūr give clear evidence not only of the diligent pursuit of constitutional reform in village *sabhās* but of Parāntaka's love of high-sounding titles. The Karandai plates (of Rājendra I) lay special stress on the canal system created by Parāntaka for the improvement of agriculture.

The period of thirty years or less that intervened between the close of Parāntaka's reign and the accession of Rājarāja I in A.D. 985 is marked by weakness and confusion, and its history, in spite of the abundance of epigraphic material, is not altogether free from doubts. It is not possible here to set forth the details of the evidence and the considerations for and against the different views possible.[226] Before beginning the narrative of the probable course of events in the period, the genealogy of the kings and the order of their succes-

222 Colas, I, 169.

223 739 of 1905.

224 *EI*, XXVI, 230-35. It is not easy, without positive evidence, to accept the postulate of a war undertaken by Parāntaka in support of Govinda IV after his dethronement by his rebellious nobles.

225 2 and 1 of 1898; *Studies in Cōla History and Administration*, 131-75.

226 See *Cōlas* I, 165-82 for a full discussion.

sion may be indicated. The genealogy, as gathered from the copper-plate charters of the time, is as follows:

Parāntaka I

- By Kokkilān
  - Rājāditya
- Gaṇḍarāditya
  - Madhurāntaka Uttama Chola (Parakesari)
    - Āditya II
- By Kerala princess
  - Ariñjaya m Kalyānī of the Vaidumba race
    - Parāntaka II Sundara Chola (Rājakesari)
      - Karikāla
      - Rājarāja I

The order of succession was the following:

	A.D.
Rājakesari Gaṇḍarāditya	949-957
Parakesari Ariñjaya	*c.* 956-957
Rājakesari Sundara Chola Parāntaka II	*c.* 956-973
(Parakesari Āditya II)	*c.* 956-969
Parakesari Uttama Chola	969-985

The convention was that the ruling monarchs called themselves Parakesari and Rājakesari alternately; as Āditya II did not live to rule independently and was followed by Uttama Chola who became *yuvarāja* in Sundara's lifetime and succeeded him after his death, both Āditya and Uttama Chola have been marked Parakesaris in accordance with their records, and Āditya's name has been put within brackets to indicate that he did not rule as an independent sovereign.

Rājāditya having met his fate at Takkolam, his younger brother Gaṇḍarāditya immediately took his place as *yuvarāja*, and his independent rule is attested by three Rājakesari inscriptions from the Trichinopoly district,[227] all dated in the eighth year and mentioning Pillaiyār or Ālvār Arikulakesarideva. There is reference to gifts made to the temple of Tiruveṇkāḍu by Sembiyan Mahādeviyār, the queen of Gaṇḍarāditya *alias* Mummudi-chola-deva in the second year of his reign; it occurs in an inscription of the sixth year of Rājarāja I.[228]

227 176 of 1907; 570 and 574 of 1908 (*SII*, III, 111, 112).

228 444 of 1918. 252 of 1936-37 is a record of the second year of Mummuḍi-Chola Gaṇḍarāditya himself.

The sphere of Chola rule under Gaṇḍarāditya must have been very limited as Kṛishṇa III continued to occupy large parts of the Chola country to the end of Gaṇḍarāditya's reign. In fact Kṛishṇa was still fighting against stiff resistance in the Chola country in the early years of Gaṇḍarāditya's reign. In an inscription of the second regnal year (951) the Chedi chieftain Narasiṁha-varman Siddhavaḍavan of Tirukkoyilur claims to have won a success in the battle of Viracholapuram, apparently fighting on the side of the Chola against the Rashṭrakūṭa invader; four years later, the same chieftain had to acknowledge Kṛishṇa III as his overlord.[229] Gaṇḍarāditya was the author of a hymn on the Chidambaram temple in which he calls himself the king of Koli (Uṛaiyūr) and lord of Tañjaiyar (people of Tanjore) and mentions his father's conquest of the Pāṇdya country and Ceylon and his gilding of the temple. Gaṇḍarāditya had the title Mérkelundarulinadevar, the king who went to the west;[230] it is not easy to explain this. His queen Sembiyan-mahādevī survived him for many years and lived on till 1001, leading a life of devotion and charity; building many stone temples and conferring substantial endowments upon them. The son of Gaṇḍarāditya being an infant, the next ruler was his younger brother Ariñjaya whose position as *yuvarāja* had been recognized by Gaṇḍarāditya. There is no evidence available of the transactions of Ariñjaya's short reign. Two of his queens, Vīman Kundavai and Kodaipirāṭṭi, survived him and made gifts in his son's reign.[231] It is not certain whether the former was an Eastern Chalukya princess, a daughter of Chālukya Bhīma II, or the daughter of a nobleman of the Tamil country, Araiyan-Ādittan Vīman, who figures in two inscriptions from Tiruppalanam[232] dated in the second year of a Parakesari who may have been Ariñjaya himself. Ariñjaya died at Āṛrūr, a place which must have been very near Mélpāḍi where Rājarāja I erected a memorial temple called Ariñjīśvara. The place of Ariñjaya's death shows that he had begun the task of recovering the territory occupied by Kṛīshṇa III. Evidently he met with little success as we may surmise not only from his death in the frontier-region, but also from the continuation of the series of inscriptions dated in the regnal years of Kṛishṇa III for another ten years till about A.D. 967. A daughter of Arikulakesari, called Ariñjigai-pirāṭṭiyar, is said to have become a Bāṇa queen,[234] an alliance which may imply that Ariñjaya sought to win over the Bāṇas to his side in his contest with the

229 *ARE*, 1936-37, II, 22.
230 540 of 1920.
231 572 and 587 of 1920.
232 167 and 172 of 1928.
233 86 of 1899 (*SII*, III, 17).
234 215 of 1911.

Rāshṭrakūṭa invader. As the inscription mentioning this fact is dated in the reign of a Rājakesari, it is probable that the Bāṇa alliance was contracted even in the reign of Gaṇḍarāditya, and that Ariñjaya was only continuing the diplomatic and military policy initiated by his elder brother.

Ariñjaya was succeeded by his son Sundara Chola Parāntaka II, also known as Maduraikoṇḍa Rājakesari. Sundara's attention was first given to the Pāṇḍyan war in the south of which the exact course is far from easy to ascertain. A certain Vīra Pāṇḍya, as already noted, claims to have 'taken the head' of a Chola; some time later Vīra Pāṇḍya was either killed or defeated in battle by Āditya II Karikāla when he was still a boy. The identity of the Chola who was defeated and humiliated or killed by Vīra Pāṇḍya is not known.[235] But that the Chola reprisal came in the reign of Sundara Chola is clear. The Leyden grant[236] says that in a great battle at Chévūr (south of Sevali hills, the southern boundary of Pudukkoṭṭai), Parāntaka caused rivers of blood to flow, and that his son Āditya, yet a boy, played with Vīra Pāṇḍya in battle, like a lion's whelp sporting with a tusker. We may assume that the battle furnished the occasion for Āditya 'taking the head' of Vīra Pāṇḍya, a title which occurs in the Parakesari inscriptions of Āditya. The Leyden grant does not state explicitly, that Vīra Pāṇḍya was slain by Āditya, though the Tiruvālaṅgādu plates do. But in the inscriptions Sundara Chola gets the titles 'Captor of Madurai', and 'he who drove the Pāṇḍya into the forest', and so the chances are that, after the battle of Chévūr in which Vīra Pāṇḍya sustained a bad defeat, the Chola forces led, among others, by Bhūti Vikramakesari and his lieutenant Parāntakan Śiṟiyavelār of Koḍumbālūr, continued the campaign in the Pāṇḍya country and forced Vīra Pāṇḍya to seek refuge in the forests.[237] On this occasion also the Pāṇḍya was supported by troops from Ceylon, with the result that Śiṟiyavélār led an expedition to the island where he fell fighting in the third year of Sundara Chola, about A.D. 959.[238] The Ceylonese chronicle confirms

235 To Vīra Pāṇḍya's reign has been assigned the period A.D. 947-966 (*EI*, XXV, 37). I think the better date for the commencement of his reign is 938, which is also in accord with the astronomy of his records. Either date would make it possible that Vīra Pāṇḍya killed Parāntaka I in battle; but this cannot be accepted without more tangible proof. If Vīra Pāṇḍya is taken to have lost his life in the battle of Chévūr, then the Pāṇḍya driven into the forest by Sundara Chola must have been another, a successor of his. The dates adopted here for Vīra Pāṇḍya get support from a Vaṭṭeluttu record of the king (No. 34 of 1946-47) which is being edited in *EI*, by M. Venkataramiah of the office of the Government Epigraphist.

236 vv 25, 28.

237 302 of 1908; Kanyākumāri inscr. v. 63; also the newly discovered Karandai plates of Rājendra.

238 116 of 1896 (*SII*, V, 980)

the account by recording an unsuccessful Chola expedition against the island in the reign of Mahinda IV (A.D. 954-70).[239] The Vessagiri slab inscription of Mihindu (Mahinda) likewise mentions the successful campaign of *senāpati* Sena against the Damilas, i.e. Cholas.[240]

The reign of Sundara Chola was thus a period of recovery from the disasters of the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion. But the reconquest of the south was far from complete, and several years later Rājarāja I claimed that he subdued the Pāṇḍyas when they were still powerful and illustrious, implying thereby that his father and elder brother, in spite of their exertions, had not made much headway against them. Things shaped better in the north, where Kṛishṇa's inscriptions get fewer and those of Sundara, Āditya, and Pārthivendravarman (most probably an alternative name of Āditya himself as one inscription gives the name Pārthivendra Ādittaparumar)[241] become more numerous. We have, however, no knowledge of the steps in the progress of the Chola recovery. That Sundara took an active share in the direction of affairs in the north becomes evident from the fact that he died in his 'golden palace' at Kāñchīpuram and thereafter came to be called '*pon-māligait-tuñjina-dévar*'.[242] At his death, one of his queens, Vānavanmahādevi performed *satī* and her image was installed later in the Tanjore temple by her daughter Kundavai.[243] Sundara left behind him the reputation of a second Manu born to wean the world from the ways of evil (*kali*). In Sundara Chola's reign literature, Sanskrit and Tamil, received encouragement. The earliest copper-plate charter of the period written in ornate Sanskrit and Tamil dates from his reign, and a highly poetic eulogium of his reign, cited in the commentary of the *Vīraśoḷiyam*,[244] a work on Tamil grammar, bears witness to his patronage of letters. The eulogy calls Sundara king of Nandipura (modern Nāthankovil); it is addressed to the Buddha to secure the strength and prosperity of the king, and furnishes evidence of the prevalence of friendly relations between the Chola monarchs and the southern Buddhist *saṅgha* many years before the date of the larger Leyden grant of Rājarāja's reign which records the gift of an entire village to a Sumatran Buddhist monastery at Negapatam.

Sundara Chola's last days were clouded by domestic tragedy. Its details are revealed casually by an inscription of the second year of

239 *CV*, Ch. 54, pp. vv, 12-16.
240 *EZ*, I, 29ff.
241 *SII*, III, 158.
242 *Ibid.*, 288 and n. 5.
243 Tiruvālangadu Pl. vv, 65-66; 236 of 1902, (*SII*, VII 863); *SII*, II, 73.
244 *Yāppu*, V, 11 (pp. 102-3).

Rājarāja from Uḍaiyārguḍi.[245] Under orders from Rājarāja the *sabhā* of Vīranārāyaṇa-Chaturvedimaṅgalam, now called Kāṭṭummannār-koyil in South Arcot, arranged for the confiscation and sale of the properties of some persons who had been found guilty of treason as they had 'murdered Karikāla Chola who took the head of Vīra Pāṇḍya' (i.e. Āditya II). The murder was most probably instigated by Uttama Chola, who, though born in the elder branch of the royal family, found himself shut out from the throne when the young Āditya was proclaimed *yuvarāja*. The Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates give a veiled account of the tragedy and its results in some verses which by themselves are somewhat enigmatic, but become fully intelligible in the light of the Uḍaiyārguḍi inscription. Āditya disappeared owing to his desire to see heaven. Though his subjects, with a view to dispel the blinding darkness caused by the powerful *kali* (Sin), entreated Arumolivarman, he, versed in the *dharma* of the *kshattra*, did not desire the kingdom for himself even inwardly as long as his paternal uncle coveted his own (i.e. Arumoḷivarma's) country'. The sun of Āditya had set as the result of crime; the darkness of sin prevailed; the people appealed to Arumoḷi (Rājarāja) to dispel it. But that would have meant civil war, and so, though by no means a coward, Rājarāja yet consented to a compromise by which Uttama Chola was to become *yuvarāja* immediately and successor to Sundara, but was to be succeeded not by his children but by Rājarāja himself. Naturally the murderers of Āditya went scot-free so long as their instigator reigned; they paid the penalty of their treason after his death. Sundara Chola died a few years after the murder of his elder son and heir-apparent, and was followed on the throne by Uttama Chola.

By the time of Uttama Chola's accession (969) the Chola recovery had advanced far, particularly in the north. South Arcot, North Arcot, and Chingleput again became Chola territory as attested by a number of inscriptions recording endowments, sales, and the construction of irrigation works and showing that general peace had been restored and the effects of the wars forgotten.

Of the events of the sixteen years during which Uttama Chola ruled we learn little from the numerous stone inscriptions of his time or from the Madras Museum plates of which the beginning is missing. Like other Chola copper-plates, the Museum plates are beautiful specimens of calligraphy and are of very great interest to the study of the social life and administration of the Chola kingdom; but they add little to our knowledge of political history. Some inscriptions from the Trichinopoly district[246] mention a high official of Uttama Chola's

245 *EI*, XXI, No. 27, pp. 165ff.
246 165-67 of 1929.

government by name—Ambalavan Paḷuvūr Nakkan of Kuvalālam (Kolar). He was an officer of *perundaram* rank who rebuilt of stone the old shrine of Vijayamaṅgalam celebrated by Appar as a temple (in Govindaputtūr on the banks of the Coleroon) commemorating Arjuna's penance for obtaining Śiva's favour; on this officer Uttama conferred the title of *Vikrama-śola-mārāyar,* from which we may infer that Vikrama was a title of Uttama. The officer continued to serve Rājarāja I with the title *Mummuḍiśola* prefixed to his personal name, and with another title *Rājarāja Pallavaraiyan.* From his birthplace we may infer that Uttama Chola's sway extended to Kolar; this is rendered probable by a conflict between him and the Western Chalukya ruler Taila II mentioned in the Sogal inscription of Śaka 902 (980).[247]

The earliest known Chola coin is a gold piece of Uttama Chola's reign, a unique specimen figured by Sir Walter Elliot from a drawing, though the coin seems to have been somehow lost.[248] Its obverse and reverse are identical, the centre occupied by a seated tiger facing a fish to proper right and separated from it by a line, the legend Uttama Cholan in *grantha* characters along the circular margin, all within a ring of beads. The weight of the coin was estimated by Elliot at 50 to 60 grains, and this conforms to the standard that prevailed in South India before the time of Rājarāja I.[249]

The names of five queens of Uttama Chola are known from his inscriptions recording endowments by all of them in a village that bore the name of their mother-in-law Śembiyan-mahādevi in the Tanjore district. One son of Uttama Chola, Madhurāntakan Gaṇḍarāditya, held office under Rājarāja I.

247 *EI*, XVI, 2 : *balavach chola mahādharendra kuliśam.*

248 Elliot, *Coins of Southern India*, 132, No. 151. Nos. 152-54 are coins of Rājendra I.

249 Codrington, *Ceylon Coins*, 74.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE CHĀLUKYAS OF BĀDĀMI

1. ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

THE ORIGIN OF THE Chālukyas of Bādāmi, the successors of the Vākāṭakas in the overlordship of the Deccan, is still shrouded in considerable obscurity. The original name of the dynasty is itself uncertain. The early records of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi give the name of their house as Chalkya,[1] Chalikya, or Chaḷikya,[2] and the form Chālukya becomes common only after the lapse of a century. We have adopted it as the name of the dynasty for the sake of convenience.[2a]

Like some other clans and dynasties of ancient India, the Chālukyas have been assigned a foreign origin by some scholars. Rice held that the Chālukyas and Pallavas were immigrants from Seleucia and Parthia, and naturally carried on their old traditional hostility in the country of their migration.[3] The Scythians, the Parthians and the Kushāṇas, however, betray their foreign origin by the un-Indian forms of the names of their early rulers like Chashṭana, Gondopharnes, Kadphises, etc. Such is not the case with any of the early Chālukya rulers. Nor are references to Chālukyas found in any records or inscriptions hailing from the Panjāb, and belonging to about the fourth or fifth century A.D. The phonetic resemblance between Seleucia and Chālukyas must therefore be regarded as purely accidental. D. R. Bhandarkar and V. A. Smith thought that the Chālukyas were a branch of the Gurjaras, and so foreign immigrants into India like the latter.[4] There is, however, no evidence to show that the Chālukyas were a branch of the Gurjaras. The argument that the province of Gujarāt came to bear its present name during the reign of the Chālukyas, and so the latter must be of Gurjara extraction, is also very weak. It is during the rule of later Chalukyas of Aṇahilapattana

1 Bādāmi ins., A.D. 578, *IA*, III, p. 305.

2 Nerūr Pl. c. A.D. 590, *IA*, VII, p. 161.

2a 'The name of the dynasty is spelt with a long *ā* in the first syllable, as Chālukya became the normal spelling in later times. Most of the records of the Early Chālukyas spell their name with a short vowel in the first syllable' (cf. *BG*. I, ii, p. 180).

3 Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions*, p. 62.

4 *IA*, XL, p. 24; *EHI*, pp. 440-1; *JBBRAS*, XXI, pp. 425 ff.

(*c.* A.D. 960-1175) and not that of early Chālukyas of Bādāmi (*c.* A.D. 550-750) that Gujarat got its present name. Neither traditions nor inscriptions establish any connection between the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and the Chaulukyas of Aṇahilapattana. There is no evidence whatsoever to show that the Chālukyas of Bādāmi were of the Gurjara stock; they had no connection with the modern province of Gujarat till they conquered its southern part in *c.* A.D. 630. The fact that Pulakeśin II took pride in having conquered the Gurjaras suggests that his house did not belong to that race. There is thus hardly any evidence to show that the Chālukyas were ethnically of the Gurjara stock and therefore of foreign extraction. Besides, it is not yet definitely known whether the Gurjaras themselves were foreigners and this question has been discussed elsewhere.

Among the officers of the Ikshvākus, who flourished in the third century A.D. (Vol. II), there is one who bears the name of Vāsiṭhīputa Khaṁda-chaliki-reṁmanka.[5] But as he is expressly described as belonging to the family of the Hiraṁñakas, it may well be doubted whether the word *chaliki*, which forms part of his name, can be rightly regarded as suggesting his extraction from the stock or family later known as Chalkya or Chaliki.

The mythological history of the dynasty, as officially accepted by the later Chālukyas of Kalyāṇī in the eleventh century, assigns it a northern origin. We are told that as many as fifty-nine kings of this house ruled at Ayodhyā before one of its scions migrated to the Deccan.[6] Neither sober history nor the records of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi are, however, aware of any connection of the house with Ayodhyā at any stage of its history; we cannot, therefore, attach any importance to this story. Bilhaṇa's account[7] of how the founder of the dynasty issued miraculously from the *chuluka* or water in the palm of Brahmadeva, and the statements made in the eleventh and twelfth century records[8] about Atri, the Moon, Budha, Āyu, Manu etc. being among the ancestors of the Chālukyas are just interesting myths.

The earliest documents of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi state that they were Hārītiputras of Mānavya-*gotra*, famous for their devotion to Svāmi Mahāsena and Saptamātṛikās. Records of the Chuṭu Sātakarṇis and the Kadambas, who were ruling in Karnatak before the Chālukyas, also describe the rulers of these dynasties as belonging to the identical family and *gotra* and devoted to the same deities. It would, therefore, appear that the Chālukyas of Bādāmi were connec-

5 *EI*, XX, p. 19.
6 *IA*, XVI, p. 21.
7 *Vikramāṅkadevacharita*, I, pp. 63-67.
8 *IA*, XIV, p. 48; XIX, p. 427.

ted with the Chuṭu Sātakarṇis and the Kadambas in a manner not yet clearly known. It has been suggested that Jayasiṁha, who was a commander of the fort of Harivatsa under the Rāshṭrakūṭa chief Abhimanyu[9] somewhere in M. P., may be identical with the grandfather of Pulakeśin I. [10] There is nothing impossible in this suggestion; Jayasiṁha, who belonged to Karnatak, may have sought service in M.P.[11] as a seeker of fortune. The date of Abhimanyu is, however, not yet definitely known, and his contemporaneity with Jayasiṁha, the grandfather of Pulakeśin I, cannot, therefore be definitely asserted.

The available evidence thus tends to show that the Chālukyas were an indigenous Brāhmaṇa family,[12] being in some way related to the Chuṭu Sātakarṇis and the Kadambas of Karnatak. The story of their rise to power is shrouded in obscurity. The records of the later Chālukya dynasty, of the eleventh century; state that Jayasiṁha, the grandfather of Pulakeśin I, rose to eminence by overthrowing the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Indra, son of Kṛishṇa, obviously some time about A.D. 500.[13] It has been also argued that this Rāshṭrakūṭa king Indra may have been a grandson of king Avidheya of the Pāṇḍuraṅgapalli grant.[14] There is, however, no evidence to show that king Avidheya was a Rāshṭrakūṭa or that he had a grandson named Indra. If the overthrow of this early Rāshṭrakūṭa family really marked the foundation of the Chālukya power, it is difficult to explain why this most important achievement of the founder of the house was completely ignored in *all* the grants of the early Chālukyas. It should have been mentioned at least in the Aihoḷe inscription by Ravikīrti, who scrupulously describes all the exploits of the ancestors of his hero Pulakeśin II. As it is, he grows eloquent in describing the valour and successes of Jayasiṁha in general terms, but is altogether silent about his ever having defeated a Rāshṭrakūṭa king Indra, as stated in the later Chālukya records.[15]

The Vākāṭakas were the predecessors of the Chālukyas in the overlordship of the Deccan, and it has been shown already (Ch. VII) how

9 *EI*, VIII, p. 163. This record is undated and so Abhimanyu's date cannot be determined with certainty.

10 J. Dubreuil, *Ancient History of the Dekkan*, p. 111.

11 It has been suggested that Abhimanyu was ruling, not in Madhya Pradesh, but in Satara district of Mahārāshtra. *ABORI*, XXV, pp. 36-50. If that be so, the scene of his service would be on the outskirts of Karnatak.

12 Hiuan Tsang describes Pulakeśin II as a Kshatriya; that may be due to his being a king. The Kadambas also later became known as Kshatriyas owing to their profession.

13 Eg. Kauthem and Yewur plates, *IA*, XVI, p. 21; VIII, p. 11.

14 *MAR*, 1929, p. 197.

15 For a fuller discussion of this question, see Altekar, 'Was There a Rāshṭrakūṭa Empire in the 6th Century?', *ABORI*, XXIV, pp. 149-155.

their last known king Harishena was ruling over practically the whole of the old Hyderabad State, Mahārāshṭra, Berar and a considerable portion of M.P. His son and successor, if any, was probably a weak and sensuous ruler,[16] and the feudatories began to reassert themselves and declare independence. There was a race for the hegemony of the Deccan, and the Kadambas of Karnatak, the Mauryas of Konkana, the Kalachuris, and the Naḷas of Chattisgarh seem to have been the chief among the early competitors. They were all, however, destined to be overthrown by the Chālukyas in a short time.

In his Aihoḷe panegyric Ravikīrti has attributed no specific exploits to Jayasiṁha and Raṇarāga, the grandfather and father, respectively, of Pulakeśin I.[17] The same is the case with the Mahākūṭa record of Maṅgaleśa, who was the grandson of Raṇarāga. We may, therefore, conclude that neither Jayasiṁha nor his son Raṇarāga was anything more than a petty local chief or officer. It is, however, not unlikely that they served in the army of the Kadambas or the Mauryas, while these were fighting for the supremacy of the Deccan, and succeeded in carving a small principality somewhere in southern Mahārāshṭra or northern Karnatak.[18]

The real founder of the greatness of the dynasty was *Mahārāja* Pulakeśin I[19] (*c.* A.D. 535-66). His *birudas* were *satyāśraya* 'the asylum of truth' and *raṇavikrama* 'the valorous in war'. The Aihoḷe *praśasti* describes him as the bridegroom of the damsel, viz. the city of Vātāpī, the capital of the Chālukyas.[20] The peculiar propriety of describing Pulakeśin I in this way has been brought out by an inscription[20a] carved on a boulder of the Bādāmi fort which describes how it was fortified in Śaka 465 (A.D. 543-44) by the Chālukya king Vallabheśvara, who had performed several sacrifices including the *Aśvamedha.* Among the Chālukya king Pulakeśin alone is credited with the performance of Aśvamedha sacrifice. We may, therefore, be sure that the Chālukya king Vallabheśvara, who fortified Vātāpī, is identical with Pulakeśin I, who also bore the epithet Vallabha. Other known

16 *ABORI*, XXVI, p. 20. See above, Ch. VII, p. 145.

17 The statement in the eleventh century records that Pulakeśin was the son of Vijayāditya, the adventurer from Ayodhyā, has no historical value.

18 It has been shown above how the overthrow of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, attributed to Jayasiṁha by later records, cannot be accepted as a historical fact.

19 Both the spelling and derivation of this name are uncertain. Fleet thinks it to be a hybrid word, meaning 'tiger-haired', Pule-huli, standing for tiger in Old Canarese (*DKD*, p. 343 n. 5). Prof. K. A. N. Sastri has suggested that the name of the king means 'great lion', the root *pul* meaning 'to be great' according to Sanskrit lexicons. Neither derivation is convincing.

20 *IA*, VIII, p. 237, v. 4.

20a *EI*, XXVII, pp. 4-9.

facts of history also show that the year A.D. 543-44, when Vātāpī was fortified, fell within the reign of Pulakeśin I.

Very little is known about the personality and career of Pulakeśin I. He seems to have made Vātāpī the capital of the rising kingdom of the Chālukyas. His celebration of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice need not imply that he had aimed at or achieved any imperial status; for a number of feudatory chiefs are known to have performed this sacrifice during the four centuries preceding the time of Pulakeśin. It is not very likely that the Chālukya principality comprised more than two or three districts during the reign of Pulakeśin which may be placed between *c.* A.D. 535 and 566.

Pulakeśin was primarily a warrior as his epithet *raṇavikrama*, 'valorous on the battle-field', shows. Perhaps he had also a literary taste; some later records describe him as well grounded in *Manusmṛiti*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the Purāṇas and history.[21] Being a Brāhmin by caste, he naturally took delight in utilizing part of his growing wealth in celebrating a number of sacrifices like *Agnishṭoma, Agnichayana, Vājapeya, Bahusuvarṇa, Puṇḍarīka and Aśvamedha.* He also performed the *Hiraṇyagarbha* ritual, calculated to secure a divine body in heaven. Durlabhamahādevī was his chief queen. She belonged to the Batpura family which held a fief somewhere in southern Koṅkaṇa.

2. KĪRTI-VARMAN I (C. A.D. 567-597)

Pulakeśin I had two sons, Kīrti-varman (also called Kīrtirāja) and Maṅgaleśa, who appear to have been half-brothers. Of these the former, who was the elder, ascended the throne in Śaka 488 or A.D. 566-67. Besides the usual *biruda* of *pṛithvīvallabha*, he bore the epithets of *satyāśraya* 'the asylum of truth' and *Pururaṇaparākrama*, 'valorous in war like Puru'. Like his father, he also had a fairly long reign of about 30 years which closed in A.D. 597-98.

Luckily we have sufficient data to reconstruct the career of Kīrti-varman. One of his earliest acts was to further fortify his capital.[22] He then pursued an aggressive imperial policy and defeated in turn the Naḷas of Bastar, the Mauryas of Konkan and the Kadambas of Banavāsi. But his victory, at least over the last two, was evidently not of a decisive character, for we find his son Pulakeśin again proceeding to chastize them. We may, however, safely assume that these States were

21 *IA*, XIX, p. 16.

22 Chiplun plates of his son Pulakeśin describe him as the founder of Vātāpī, *Vātāpyāh prathamavidhātuh*, *EI*, III, p. 51, but in view of the new Bādāmi rock inscription we shall have to take this statement with a grain of salt.

made to acknowledge Chālukya overlordship and compelled to cede considerable territories to the conqueror. As a consequence of these victories and annexations, most of Mahārāshṭra and a greater part of the old Hyderabad State came within the Chālukya sphere of influence. This conclusion is supported by the fact that when his successor Maṅgaleśa thought of expansion in the northern direction, he had to cross the Narmadā to attack the Kalachuris ruling beyond that river. We may, therefore, reasonably conclude that towards the end of the long reign of Kīrti-varman, Western India from Khāndesh to Goa came under the Chālukyas. The eastern boundaries of the kingdom cannot be definitely determined, but a greater part of the old Hyderabad State seems to have been included in it; for, otherwise, the invasion of the Naḷa territory in Bastar region would have been impossible. To transform a small principality of a few districts into such an extensive kingdom was no doubt a creditable feat, attesting the bravery, diplomatic skill, and power of organisation of the reigning king.

Kīrti-varman is also credited with having defeated the kings of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Vaṭṭūra, Magadha, Madraka, Kerala, Gaṅga, Mūshaka, Pāṇḍya, Dramila, Chola, Aḷūka (Āḷupa) and Vaijayantī in an official record issued within five years of his death.[23] There is no doubt that love of alliteration and the desire to parade geographical knowledge are mainly responsible for this grandiose list. We cannot, however, exclude the responsibility of frontier skirmishes having occurred between the Chālukyas and some of the powers mentioned. If Kīrti-varman's attack against the Naḷas of Bastar region is a historic event, his skirmishes with the Kaliṅgas and Mūshakas could not be purely imaginary. Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha seem far off from Mahārāshṭra, but we should not forget that the Maukhari emperor Īśānavarman, who was about this time ruling over U.P. and Bihar, claims to have defeated the Andhras and the Śūlikas. If the latter were Chālukyas, as suggested by some, we cannot dismiss the conflict with the Aṅgas, Vaṅgas and Magadhas as purely imaginary. It is not unlikely that occasional skirmishes occurred between adventurous captains of the Maukharis and the Chālukyas in the no man's land lying between the two kingdoms, and these may have been hailed as victories by either side. Among the southern powers, the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas and the Keralas could hardly have come into conflict with the Chālukyas, but this can hardly be said about the Gaṅgas and the Āluṗas, who were the immediate southern neighbours of Kīrtivarman. We may, therefore, conclude that while the Chālukya kingdom embraced Mahārāshṭra and parts of Karnatak and the old Hydera-

23 Mahākūṭa inscription, *IA*, XIX, p. 16.

bad State, advanced guards of its armies may have come into conflict with the Gaṅgas and the Āḷupas in the south, the Kaliṅgas and the Mūshakas in the east, and the Maukharis in the north.

The task of guarding a portion of the southern boundary of the kingdom was entrusted to Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman in *c.* A.D. 590.[24] This governor belonged to Ādi-mahā-Bappura family, probably the same as that of Durlabhamahādevī, the mother of Kīrti-varman. It is very likely that he was a son of Kīrtivarman's maternal uncle and was stationed at Revatīdvīpa[25] situated in the Ratnagiri district, where we find him at the beginning of the reign of Pulakeśin II.

Like his father, Kīrti-varman performed a number of Vedic sacrifices such as *Bahusuvarṇa* and *Agnishṭoma*. He was, however, equally interested in Pauranic religion and gods, and constructed a beautiful cave temple for Vishṇu at Bādāmi. The king's younger brother was in charge of the construction of the work which he completed in A.D. 578. Kīrti-varman, however, was not a narrow Vaishṇava, for he sanctioned land endowment to a temple of Makuṭeśvaranātha, a form of Śiva.[26] Kīrti-varman died in A.D. 597-98 leaving at least three sons viz. Pulakeśin, Vishṇu-vardhana and Jayasiṁha.

3. MAṄGALEŚA (C. A.D. 597-610)

Kīrti-varman I left several sons behind, but was succeeded by his younger half-brother Maṅgaleśa in A.D. 597-98.[27] At the time of his coronation he took the titles of *raṇavikrānta* and *üru-raṇavikrānta* 'valorous in great battle', and *prithvīvallabha* 'the favourite of the earth'. Like his elder brother he revered both Vishṇu and Śiva. We have seen above how, acting as his brother's agent, he completed the construction of the Vishṇu cave at Bādāmi in A.D. 578. He, however, commemorated his victory over the Kalachuris by increasing the endowment of the Śaiva temple Makuṭeśvarnātha.[28]

Some time about A.D. 600 he led an expedition against the Kalachuri king Buddharāja, son of Śaṅkaragaṇa, who was ruling in southern Gujarat and Malwa. It is stated that Buddharāja was defeated

24 *JBBRAS*, X, p. 365.

25 Bhandarkar and Fleet have correctly identified this with the fort of Rairee situated on a promontery about 8 miles south of Vengurla in the Ratnagiri district. The view that Revatīdvīpa is Sumatra is untenable; see *DKD*, p. 347, n. 2.

26 *IA*, XIX, p. 7.

27 R. G. Bhandarkar placed the accession of Maṅgaleśa in Śaka 513 or A.D. 591, *EHD*, p. 81. This is an untenable view because the Goa plates of Dhruvarāja Indravarman obviously refer to the 20th year of his own reign and not Maṅgaleśa's, who is not even mentioned in the record. See *JBBRAS*, X, p. 365.

28 *IA*, XIX, p. 7.

and fled from the battle-field, leaving a large booty in the hands of the victor.[29] A portion of it was utilized by the conqueror in giving religious donations to the temples in and near the capital. The defeat of Buddharāja had no far-reaching consequences, for we find him ruling his kingdom a decade after his defeat.[30]

We have already seen how Revatīdvīpa had been annexed to the Chālukya kingdom by Kīrti-varman in *c.* A.D. 590. The local governor, however, was unable to retain it, and Maṅgaleśa had to effect its reconquest,[31] probably some time between 602 and 608. Dhruvarāja Indravarman was continued in the governance of the province.

Several records of the later Chālukyas, composed four centuries later, state that Maṅgaleśa was merely acting as a regent for his minor nephew Pulakeśin, and that he willingly handed over the administration to the rightful heir as soon as he came of age. Contemporary records, however, show that such was not the case; later court-poets have simply glossed over an unpleasant episode in order to show that 'no scion of the Chālukya family can ever think of an unrighteous step'. At the time of Kīrti-varman's death in A.D. 597, it appears that Pulakeśin, his eldest living son, was still in his teens. The relations between Kīrti-varman and Maṅgaleśa were fairly cordial during the reign of the former.[32] Maṅgaleśa seems to have discharged the duties of *yuvarāja* (heir-apparent) as Pulakeśin was too young during the greater part of his father's reign.[33] It appears that Maṅgaleśa was permitted to carry on the administration as before after the death of his brother, as Pulakeśin was an inexperienced youth of only about 15 or 16 at that time. The relations between Maṅgaleśa and his nephew were cordial for some time. The uncle was already more than 50 and the idea probably was that at his death the crown will pass on to Pulakeśin.

Maṅgaleśa, however, soon changed his mind and began to work for leaving the throne to his son after his death. He began to eliminate the reign of his brother in his charters[34] and formed a party to defeat

29 *IA*, XIX, p. 16.

30 Sarsavṇī Plates, *EI*, VI, p. 297. The discovery of this record renders untenable the view of Fleet (*DKD*. p. 347) that as a result of this victory, the Chālukya dominion extended up to the Kim if not the Māhī.

31 Aihoḷe ins., v. 18.

32 *IA*, III, p. 305; X, p. 57.

33 The Bādāmī record shows that as early as A.D. 578 Maṅgaleśa was issuing grants under his own authority. *IA*, VI, p. 363.

34 *IA*, VII, p. 161.

the claims of his nephew. The latter, who was now (c. A.D. 605) about 23 or 24, had to flee from the court and seek shelter elsewhere.[35]

4. PULAKEŚIN II (c. A.D. 610-643)

Pulakeśin was a young prince endowed with energy and political insight. He soon succeeded in forming a powerful party ready and willing to support his rightful claim. His own younger brothers, Vishṇu-vardhana and Jayasiṁha, who were throughout loyal to him, may have made common cause with him.[36] Dhruvarāja Indra-varman of the Bappūra family, governing Revatīdvīpa, also probably championed his cause, for he is known to be professing loyalty to Pulakeśin as early as A.D. 610.[37] The Sendraka feudatory king Senānanda, who was his maternal uncle ruling in south Koṅkaṇa, may be presumed to have played an important part in securing the throne for his nephew, its rightful claimant. The Chālukya chief Svāmirāja, whom Maṅgaleśa claims to have overthrown and killed, may have been a collateral relation of Pulakeśin, who died fighting for his cause. Several other feudatories may have been won over by the young prince, who was remarkable as much for his diplomacy as for his energy.

The tussle between the uncle and the nephew probably lasted three or four years. This internecine war must have induced a number of lukewarm feudatories to rebel and declare independence. There was confusion and anarchy for a while everywhere in the wide Chālukya dominions.[38] But Pulakeśin won complete success. Youth, energy, diplomatic skill and rightful claim triumphed over old age, selfishness and injustice. Maṅgaleśa not only lost the cause, but also his own life. What became of his son, for whom he wanted to secure the crown, is not known. Probably he also perished in the struggle.[39] Pulakeśin formally ascended his ancestral throne some time in Śaka 532 (A.D. 609-10). *Satyāśraya* 'asylum of truth', and *vallabha* or *prithvīvallabha* 'the favourite of the earth' were his usual epithets. Though the greatest among the Chālukya kings, his own records describe him only as *Mahārāja;* only his successors' records designate

35 Aihoḷe inscription, v. 7.

36 The same probably was the case with Budhavarasa Anaṅgāśraya, if this prince also was his brother as stated in his Sañjan plates (*EI*, XIV, p. 152). The genuineness of this record is, however, doubted.

37 Cf. *Śrī-prithivī-vallabha-mahārājānujñātena*. Goa Plates, *JBBRAS*. XVI, p. 365.

38 Aihoḷe ins., v. 7.

39 Fleet's view that Dhruvarāja Indra-varman of the Goa Plates (A.D. 610-11) was probably the eldest son of Maṅgaleśa (*BG*, I, (ii), p. 349) overlooks the fact that this prince is expressly described there as belonging to the Bappūra family.

him as *Mahārājādhirāja.* The title *Parameśvara,* 'the great king', was taken by him as early as A.D. 612.

The overthrow of Maṅgaleśa did not automatically secure the whole ancestral kingdom for Pulakeśin. The feudatories, who had sided with Maṅgaleśa or who had declared independence, had to be subjugated. We can get some idea of the extent to which the Chālukya power had been shaken, when we note that in the Sholapur district, which was the very heart of the kingdom, two chiefs, Āppāyika and Govinda, openly challenged his suzerainty. Pulakeśin, however, managed to win over the latter and defeat the former.

Ravikīrti has given us a detailed description of the different conquests of Pulakeśin effected betwen A.D. 610 and 634. They seem to be, however, arranged on the geographical rather than on the chronological principle,[40] and it is, therefore, difficult to reconstruct satisfactorily the career of the great Chālukya emperor. Even the time of his most memorable achievement, namely the defeat of emperor Harsha, is a point of keen controversy among historians, one section holding that the event took place some time before A.D. 612, and the other placing it about 20 years later.

It is very likely that, after consolidating his power in the centre, Pulakeśin turned his arms against the Kadambas of Banavāsi, who had been once reduced to the feudatory status by his father. Senānanda Sendraka, his maernal uncle, and Indravarman, his Bappūra relation, who were ruling in Koṅkaṇa, must have sent their battalions to take part in this expedition. The imperial army must then have turned to the Gaṅgas and Āḷupas ruling in part of Mysore and South Canara respectively. They recognized Pulakeśin's overlordship and were allowed to rule in feudatory capacity. There is epigraphic evidence to show that the Āḷupas continued to be steadfast in their loyalty for several generations.[41]

The Mauryas of northern Koṅkaṇa had once acknowledged the Chālukya overlordship, and we may well presume that Pulakeśin next ordered his armies against them. Their island capital Purī, which was probably located in Elephanta island, off Bombay, was besieged and stormed with the help of a naval force. It is likely that all these

40 After describing the overthrow of Āppāyika and Govinda, who were creating trouble in the very heart of Pulakeśin's kingdom, Ravikīrti takes us systematically round the whole of the Deccan—from Banavāsi to Koṅkaṇa, thence to southern Gujarat and Malwa, thence to the Narmadā pass where Harsha was defeated, thence to Kosala, Kaliṅga, Pallava, Chola, Pāṇḍya and Kerala kingdoms. It is, however, hardly likely that Pulakeśin's clashes with these different states occurred in the order implied by the enumeration. Fleet, however, held this view and placed even the defeat of Harsha before the formal coronation of Pulakeśin in A.D. 610; see *DKD,* pp. 350-51.

41 *IA,* XIX, p. 149.

achievements kept Pulakeśin busy for at least six or seven years.[42] During this period the administration was carried on by his loyal younger brother Vishṇuvardhana, who was formally invested with the powers of a *yuvarāja*.[43]

We may well presume that by *c.* A.D. 616 Pulakeśin had reconquered most of his ancestral possessions.[44] But he was not content with this. Some time about *c.* 620[45] he marched against the Andhra country, won a sanguinary engagement near Koleru lake, and penetrated up to Pishṭapura, modern Pithapuram 12 miles north-east of Kākināḍa, where a feudatory of the Vishṇukuṇḍins was ruling. Most of the Andhra country was soon occupied. The Vishṇukuṇḍins, who were ruling in this province, challenged the power of the conqueror, but were defeated and their power was gradually liquidated. Pulakeśin had no intention to relinquish the Andhra country. His younger brother Vishṇu-vardhana had stood loyal to him through thick and thin and helped him in his eastern conquest. To reward his loyalty without diminishing his ancestral kingdom, Pulakeśin appointed him to rule over the newly conquered Andhra province in a semi-independent capacity. Vishṇu-vardhana was, therefore, installed to rule over the new eastern dominion with Pishṭapura[46] as his capital. During his reign (A.D. 624-41), he continued to acknowledge his elder brother's overlordship. Pulakeśin also used to pay him occasional visits : thus we find him in Andhra country in his 21st regnal year (A.D. 631) on an occasion when his brother was donating a village in Guntur district.[47] The successors of Vishṇuvardhana, however, gradually asserted their independence.

From his base at Pishṭapura, Pulakeśin launched attacks upon Kaliṅga and Kosala. But these were probably mere military raids which hardly left any permanent result behind. By A.D. 625 Pulakeśin had become a mighty monarch, a true overlord of the Deccan in the literal sense of the term. It is not unlikely that he carried on diplomatic relations with Persia. Whether the Indian embassy which visited the court of the Persian emperor Khusru II in A.D. 625-6 was

42 *EC*, VIII. Nagar 35. *Triveni*, I, pp. 112-20.

43 He is thus described in the Satara plates issued in the 8th year of Pulakeśin's reign.

44 His Yekkeri inscription, which seems to be dated in his 6th regnal year, describes him as the overlord of the Deccan. *EI*, V, p. 7.

45 According to one calculation the Eastern Chālukya records yield A.D. 618 as the initial year of the independent reign of Vishṇu-vardhana, the founder of the Eastern Chālukya dynasty. But this needs adjustment in the light of other data. See N. Venkataramanayya, *Eastern Chālukyas*, p. 49.

46 As shown by Timmapuram plates, *EI*, IX, p. 317.

47 *EI*, XVIII, p. 257, Kopparam plates.

sent by Pulakeśin or Harsha is a moot point.[48] Nor are scholars agreed as to whether two of the panels in Cave I at Ajaṇṭā really represent the visit of a return embassy sent by Khusru to the court of the Deccan emperor. The alleged Persian costume also appears elsewhere in the Ajaṇṭā paintings. It is also pointed out that the paintings and architecture of the cave belong to the age of the Vākāṭakas rather than to that of the Chālukyas; and even otherwise, there is no reason why Buddhist monks should have permitted the sudden introduction of a secular theme in honour of Pulakeśin II who is not known to have been a patron of Buddhism. Foreign costume was well-known in the Deccan from the time of the Western Kshatrapas.[49]

The occupation of Andhradeśa and the overlordship over the Gaṅgas and the Bāṇas brought the Chālukyas into direct contact with the Pallavas, and Pulakeśin sent an expedition against the Pallava king Mahendra-varman. This initiated a long feud between the Karnatak and Tamil kingdoms which weakened both the combatants and made them look upon each other as 'natural' enemies. The feud did not terminate with the two rulers or even the two dynasties, and was carried on by their respective successors for several centuries.

In the first conflict, the offensive was taken by Pulakeśin. With his bases in Gangavāḍi and Andhra country, he could easily carry the war into the enemy's country. But even Ravikīrti only claims that Pulakeśin compelled Mahendra-varman to seek the protection of the ramparts of Kāñchī. The Pallava capital was thus threatened, but not captured, by Pulakeśin. A Pallava record refers to king Mahendra-varman defeating an unnamed enemy at Pullalūra,[50] modern Pollilore, 15 miles to the north of Kāñchī. Most probably this was the place where the advancing Chālukya forces were repulsed by the Pallavas. The war was indecisive. The Chālukyas could claim victory, as they penetrated into the heart of the Pallava kingdom; but the Pallavas could also legitimately boast of success for having driven out a mighty invader.

During the next ten years, *c.* A.D. 630-40, Pulakeśin seems to have been occupied with North Indian politics. By this time both Pulakeśin and Harsha had become mighty emperors and each was anxious to

48 It appears that the name of the king can be read both as Prmesha and Plkesha. The latter can refer only to Pulakeśin but the former, which stands for Parameśvara, was the title both of Pulakeśin and Harsha. Ṭabarī describes the embassy as coming from an Indian king, and Harsha who was a powerful ruler by this time and used to import horses from Persia could also have sent the embassy. See *JRAS*, 1878; *JIH*, 1925, pp. 27-33; K. A. N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices of S. India*, p. 9.

49 Yazdani, *Ajaṇṭā*, I, pp. 46-9.

50 *SII*, II, p. 349. Kaśakuḍi plates.

extend his sphere of influence and win fresh laurels. A conflict between the two became inevitable and it took place some time between A.D. 631 and 634.[51]

Malwa, Gujarat and Kāthiāwār have often been the bones of contention between the overlords of the Deccan and North India. The same was the case at about A.D. 630. Harsha attacked Valabhī in order to bring its ruler under his sphere of influence. The Gurjara king Dadda II of Broach claims to have protected the Valabhī ruler against Harsha.[52] Dadda was a petty ruler and he could not have foiled the efforts of Harsha unaided. Ravikirti tells us that the Gurjara king as well as the rulers of Lāṭa and Mālava had become feudatories of Pulakeśin. The Lāṭas, Gurjaras and the Mālavas were hostile to the father of Harsha and also to Harsha himself, and they seem to have formed a subordinate alliance with Pulakeśin in order to oppose the onward march of Harsha. Harsha, however, soon turned the tables against Pulakeśin by winning over the Valabhī ruler to his side by marrying his daughter to him. Pulakeśin tried to strengthen his northern frontiers by appointing one of his loyal younger brothers, Jayasiṁha, the governor of Nasik and Khāndesh districts, and by creating a new viceroyalty in northern Koṅkaṇa and southern Gujarat under

51 Scholars are not agreed as to the date of this war. One school holds that it took place before A.D. 611-12. It is pointed out how Hiuan Tsang tells us that all the wars of Harsha were fought during the first six years of his reign and how the Hyderabad plates of Pulakeśin, issued in A.D. 612, show that he had already assumed the title of *Parameśvara*, which he is said to have taken only after the defeat of Harsha, *DKD*, p. 351. Mookerji, *Harsha*, p. 36. Neither argument is, however, convincing. The observation of the Chinese pilgrim that Harsha did not unsheathe his sword after A.D. 611-2 is belied by the known events of Harsha's reign; and it is only the copper-plates issued in the reign of Pulakeśin's son Vikramāditya which aver that Pulakeśin assumed the title *Parameśvara* after the overthrow of Harsha. Pulakeśin issued a number of charters before A.D. 631. They describe how he defeated enemy kings in hundreds of battles, but do not name Harsha among them. It is inconceivable that if Pulakeśin's memorable victory over Harsha had been won before A.D. 631 it should not have been described in glowing colours in his earlier records. The Kandalgaon Plates, dated A.D. 614, refer to the defeat of Harsha, but they are admitted on all hands to be spurious (*IA*, XIV, p. 330). The approximate date for this conflict given in the text, viz. some time in A.D. 631-34, is based on the circumstance that the Lohanera plates of Pulakeśin issued in A.D. 631 do not refer to Harsha's defeat, while it is described in glowing colours in the Aihoḷe record of A.D. 634. The earliest known date for Gurjara king Dadda II, who is stated to have afforded protection to the king of Valabhī against Harsha, is A.D. 629. This circumstance would also suggest that Harsha had turned his attention to Gujarat, Kāthiāwār and Deccan after *c.* A.D. 630.

52 *Parameśvara-śrī-Harshadevābhibhūta-Valabhīpati-parutrāṇopajāta-yaśovitānaḥ*, *IA*, XIII, p. 77. As A.D. 629 is the earliest known date for this ruler, Harsha could not have begun his drive against Malwa, Gujarat, and Kāthiāwār long before A.D. 630.

the charge of another younger brother named Budhavarsha Anaṅgāśraya.[53]

The actual conflict between the two emperors probably took place, as noted above, some time between A.D. 631-34. According to Hiuan Tsang, Harsha was the aggressor and summoned his best generals and mobilized his most renowned divisions in order to subdue Pulakeśin; but he failed in his objective and sustained the only rebuff of his career.[54] Ravikīrti, the court poet of Pulakeśin, also exultingly describes how the great Harsha lost all his *harsha* (joy), being overpowered by fear and dismay as his army returned discomfited, sustaining particularly heavy losses in elephants.[55] It appears that this battle convinced each combatant that he could not successfully impose his yoke upon the other, though in later years frontier skirmishes may have occurred between them.

By *c.* 640 the rule of the Chālukyas had lasted for nearly a century over the Deccan, and it would be interesting to ascertain its influence upon the moral and material welfare of the people. Luckily for the historian there is a contemporary account from the pen of a disinterested foreign observer, viz. the Chinese traveller, Hiuan Tsang. This pilgrim was in Mahārāshṭra for a few months during A.D. 640-41 and was very highly impressed by the prosperity of the country, the efficiency of the administration and the character of the people. He says:

> 'The soil is rich and fertile and it is regularly cultivated and very productive. Men are fond of learning and studying both heretical and orthodox books. The disposition of the people is honest and simple; they are tall in stature and of a stern and vindictive character. To their benefactors they are grateful, to their enemies relentless. If they are insulted, they will risk their life to avenge themselves. If they are asked to help one in distress, they will forget themselves in their haste to render assistance.'

The pilgrim then goes on to narrate how the government was efficient and army remarkably brave, and how the king could, therefore, frustrate the imperial ambitions of Harsha, the northern emperor.

Pulakeśin must have been more than 50 in A.D. 640, but neither his advancing age nor his numerous victories could induce him to

53 The genuineness of the Sanjan plates, which support the above reconstruction of history, is not above suspicion, but Konow thinks that the plates may be a copy of an earlier genuine grant. *EI*, XIV, p. 148. Jayasiṁha is known from Nirpun grant. (*DKD*, pp. 357, 360).

54 Watters, II, p. 239; Beal, *Life*, p. 147.

55 Aihoḷe ins., vv. 23-24.

sheathe his sword. His failure to capture Kāñchī was still rankling in his heart. The Pallava king Mahendra-varman had in the meanwhile been succeeded by his son Narasiṁha-varman. The new ruler was quite alive to the danger from the north and sought to strengthen his position by all means, and enlisted the help of Māna-varman, the exiled Ceylonese king. There seems to be no justification for the view that he made alliance with some of his northern neighbours like the Bāṇas of Bāṇavāḍi.[56]

Pulakeśin seems to have watched the situation for some time, but eventually he decided to take the offensive. As usual, he carried the war in the enemy's territory and penetrated almost to the outskirts of Kāñchī. But Narasiṁha-varman was soon able to turn the tables against the invader. He defeated the Chālukya army in three successive engagements fought at Pariyaḷa, Maṇimaṅgala and Śūramāra.[57] Maṇimaṅgala, the scene of the second battle, is only 20 miles east of Kāñchī.

In his second venture, Pulakeśin had again very nearly succeeded in winning his objective, when he was thrown back by Narasiṁha-varman. The latter, however, had realised that the Chālukya power was a real menace; it had twice threatened the capital within two decades. It was, therefore, essential that the power of the Chālukyas should be crushed for ever. He, therefore, took full advantage of the chaos caused in the Chālukya camp by three successive defeats and pressed his victories home by a bold march directly towards Vātāpī, his enemy's capital. He was successful in his objective. The city was captured, and a column of victory that had been installed there by Pulakeśin to commemorate his victory over the Pallavas was carried away as trophy.[58] The claim of several Pallava records[59] that Narasiṁha-varman was the conqueror of Vātāpī is confirmed by a damaged inscription on a rock behind the Mallikārjuna temple at Bādāmi, attesting its occupation by Narasiṁha-varman. The silence of Chālukya records about these events only shows that they usually passed over inconvenient facts. Had Pulakeśin died in one of the engagements of this war, the fact would no doubt have been exultingly mentioned in Pallava records. It appears that he retired from Vātāpī and soon died of old age and a broken heart.

Pulakeśin was at the height of his glory in A.D. 641 when Hiuan Tsang was travelling through his kingdom. The war with Kāñchī

56 *SII*, IX, i, No. 46.

57 *SII*, I, p. 148; II, p. 366.

58 *Vātāpīmadhye vijitārivargaḥ sthitaṁ jayastambham-alaṁbhayad-yaḥ*, *SII*, II, p. 508.

59 *SII*, I, p. 148.

probably took place soon after this date. We may, therefore, place his death in c. A.D. 643.

Pulakeśin was undoubtedly the ablest ruler of the Chālukya house. It was he who first secured a real imperial status for his family, and the Chālukya empire reached its greatest extent during his reign. His name and achievement struck terror in the hearts of his enemies all over the country. Victory is never a certain factor in war and the great catastrophe, that overwhelmed Pulakeśin towards the end of his career, should not be allowed to minimize the value of his earlier achievements.

5. INTERREGNUM (c. A.D. 643 - 54)

The history of the Chālukyas during the next 11 years is not easy to follow, the available evidence being insufficient, obscure and conflicting. A number of Pulakeśin's sons appear on the scene, each claiming to be the chosen successor of his father. The difficulties of the historian are not over even when one of them, Vikramāditya, succeeds in re-establishing himself as the Chālukya emperor. He claims to have captured Kāñchī and compelled the Pallava king to bow down before his feet. The Pallava records, on the other hand, graphically describe how Vikramāditya had to flee from the battle-field, covered with only a piece of rag, and how his capital was once more destroyed by the Kāñchī forces. It is not possible, in the limited space available here, to discuss the complicated problems with which this period bristles; we shall just indicate what appears to have been the probable course of events.

Māna-varman, the exiled king of Ceylon living in the court of Narasiṁha-varman, and Paradurgamardana, a feudatory chief of the latter, seem to have been the two allies who helped him in completely destroying the Chālukya power for a while.[60] It appears that not

60 The other views about the three kings who formed a confederacy are the following: (i) The '*avanipati-tritaya*' consisted of the three branches of Pallava family each holding sway over three different parts of the Pallava kingdom (Venkataramanayya, *Madras Christian College Magazine*, January 1928, pp. 7-18). (ii) The Choḷas, Pāṇḍyas and Keralas, the southern neighbours of the Pallavas (Panchamukhi in *EI*, XXII, p. 27). The Chālukya records, however, do not betray any marked animus against these powers. (iii) Narasiṁha-varman and two brothers of Vikramāditya constituted the triumvirate (K. A. N. Sastri, *JAHC*, I, p. 178). Vikramāditya, however, had very cordial relations with one of his elder brothers Chandrāditya and his widow. (iv) Pallavas, Pāṇḍyas and Māna-varman (Dubreuil, *Pallavas*, pp. 43-44). (v) Three branches of the Pallava dynasty. (vi) Three generations of the Pallava rulers, Narasiṁha-varman, Mahendra-varman II, and Parameśvara-varman I (Fleet, *DKD*, p. 362.). In favour of the view advanced in the text, it may be pointed out that Mānavarman is known to have helped Narasiṁha-varman during his exile (*EI*, III, p. 277; *SII*, II, p. 343).

only was Vātāpī captured, but a considerable portion of the Chālukya empire was also occupied by the triumvirate for five or six years. Several Chālukya records describe how Vikramāditya restored to gods and Brāhmaṇas the grants that were resumed by the conquerors.

Pulakeśin II left behind him several sons. The names of four of them are known so far—Chandrāditya, Āditya-varman, Vikramāditya,[61] and Jayasiṁha, and their seniority seems to have been in the order stated above. It is but natural that each of these sons, whose ages may have varied between 30 and 40, should have tried to retrieve the fortunes of his house. This is suggested by the Kochrem and Nerur grants of Vijayabhaṭṭārikā,[62] the widowed queen of Chandrāditya, and the Karnūl plates of Āditya-varman. Unfortunately, these charters are not dated in the Śaka era, and we cannot therefore determine their precise time. The grant of Āditya-varman, issued in his first regnal year, gives him the full imperial titles. It must obviously have been issued a few years after the death of Pulakeśin II, when Āditya-varman had succeeded in re-establishing his authority in the Ceded districts. Whether he was a real emperor of the whole of what had been recovered of the Chālukya empire may however be doubted, for we find his sister-in-law, Vijayabhaṭṭārikā also issuing, charters in South Konkan in her own name and with her husband's seal and dating at least one in her own regnal year. It would thus appear that Chandrāditya and Āditya-varman, who were probably local governors under their father in the Ceded Districts and South Konkan, succeeded in re-establishing their authority in their local spheres after a few years. They were, however, either unable or unwilling to undertake the difficult task of driving out the invaders from the whole empire and restoring its old glory. Vikramāditya, who was probably younger than both these brothers, had sufficient energy and ambition to undertake this task. We do not know whether Āditya-varman co-operated with him, but there is no doubt that Chandrāditya and his queen extended their help. Jayasiṁha-varman, a younger brother was extremely useful, and he was later rewarded by the governorship of Southern Gujarat, with a semi-independent status. A late eleventh

Paradurgamardana is described as the conqueror of Vātāpī, and his son Samarābhirama is credited with having killed a Chalukki king in a battle at Adhirājamaṅgala (*Chronological list of Inscriptions in Pudukottah State*, p. 2, no. 14. *Journal of Oriental Research*, VII, pp. 1-10.).

61 The tradition recorded in later Chālukya records that Vikramāditya was a great-grandson of Pulakeśin II, Āditya-varman and Nedamari being his father and grandfather respectively is definitely contradicted by contemporary records and has to be rejected.

62 *IA*, VII, p. 163; VIII, p. 45.

century Gaṅga record[63] gives some authority for the view that Vikramāditya received valuable assistance from his maternal grandfather, the Gaṅga king Durvinīta. But the date of Durvinīta is far from certain and it would not be wise to place explicit faith in a record issued about 500 years after the events concerned. Some feudatories also must have come forward to help the young prince, hoping to be rewarded later.[64]

The efforts of Vikramāditya and his allies were crowned with success, and the hostile forces were driven out from the territory of the Chālukyas, probably by A.D. 654. How exactly this was accomplished is, however, not yet known. There is no doubt that Vikramāditya's bravery and generalship played an important part. He was a skilful cavalry leader, and epigraphic records describe how, seated on his favourite steed Chitrakaṇṭha, Vikramāditya delivered crushing attacks against his enemy. Vikramāditya's Pallava opponent during the earlier stage of the struggle was Narasiṁha-varman, later on he had to measure swords with his successor Mahendra-varman II, who had, however, a short reign. By A.D. 660 the Chālukya power was firmly established as far south as Nellore district.[65]

6 VIKRAMĀDITYA I (A.D. 654 - 681)

The expulsion of the invaders was no doubt a great achievement, but it raised fresh difficulties, at once complicated and embarrassing. Vikramāditya, who restored the Chālukya empire, was not its rightful heir, for he had at least two elder brothers.[66] The legal heir to the throne was Chandrāditya, his eldest brother, but he had died before the reconquest was complete, and Vijayabhaṭṭārikā, the dowager-queen of Chandrāditya, assumed the reins of government. We find her giving the full imperial titles to her brother-in-law, and

63 It graphically describes how the Gaṅga king conquered the king of Kāñchī, who was like Rāvaṇa disturbing the peace of the world, and established his daughter's son in the kingdom of Jayasiṁha-vallabha, which no doubt refers to the Chālukya empire. (*EC*, VIII. Nagar No. 35.) But some scholars place Durvinīta's reign somewhat earlier.

64 The claim made on behalf of Vikramāditya in a record of his son that he restored the glory of his house with the help only of his own valour and diplomacy (Karnūl Pl. *IA*, VI, p. 86) need not be seriously taken.

65 *EI*, IX, p. 98.

66 Honnur Plates of A.D. 670 published in *MAR*, 1939, pp. 139 ff. show that probably Vikramāditya had a third elder brother Raṇarāgavikrama by name, whose daughter was married to a Gaṅga prince named Mādhava. Since Vikramāditya makes the grant recorded in this document at the request of his niece and her husband, it is clear that he was on fairly cordial terms with Ranarāgavikrama. It is possible that Raṇarāgavikrama was another elder brother who resigned his claim voluntarily in favour of Vikramāditya. It is, however, not unlikely that Raṇarāgavikrama was another name of Chandrāditya.

describing him as invincible in both the charters issued by her. But her grants are issued in her own name and not with the permission of Vikramāditya. One of them, the Nerur plates, is further dated in the fifth year of her own reign—*svarājya-pañchama-saṁvatsara*—and in the other, the Kochrem plate, she describes herself as *Vijayamahādevī* or the victorious empress; this charter further bears the seal, not of Vikramāditya but of Chandrāditya.

It is not easy to reconcile the evidence of these two charters with other known facts which make it clear that Vikramāditya was the real emperor at this time.[67] It appears that the relations between him and his sister-in-law were very cordial. In her own charters issued under her exclusive authority, she goes out of her way to describe the glorious achievements of her brother-in-law Vikramāditya, who was undoubtedly the *de facto* and *de jure* emperor. Vikramāditya, on his part, allowed his elder widowed sister-in-law to issue charters under her own authority dated in her own regnal years and stamped with the seal of her deceased husband. The facts disclosed by these two charters would suggest the Vijayabhaṭṭārikā continued to rule after her husband's death, probably as a regent for her minor son, from whose accession she dated her own reign. She was a shrewd lady. She had fully realised that the logic of facts had placed all power in the hands of her younger brother-in-law Vikramāditya, and that the theoretical seniority of herself or her minor son could no longer count for anything. She therefore recognized her brother-in-law as the emperor in her own charters. The latter probably felt that courtesy and respect for seniority demanded that he should permit Vijayabhaṭṭārikā to issue charters in her own name and to date them according to the regnal years of her minor son. It appears that this son either did not attain majority or acquiesced in the feudatory status.

Some records of Vikramāditya refer to his success in winning the crown after defeating all the *dāyādas* or collateral claimants. Who these relations were, who disputed his succession, we do not definitely

67 Fleet reconciles the conflicting facts disclosed by the above records and the charters of Vikramāditya by assuming that the latter was not the *de jure* emperor when the Kochrem and Nerur charters were issued. He thought that the *de jure* emperor at the time was a minor son of Chandrāditya, as a regent for whom Vijayabhaṭṭārikā was ruling, and that it was the death of this minor emperor that rendered the accession of Vikramāditya possible. See, *IA*, VIII, p. 45. It is, however, not likely that Vikramāditya, who had reconquered the empire by his sword, would have waited for a few years to become the *de jure* emperor. Hence the alternative reconstruction of history as suggested in the text.

know; but very probably one of them was his brother Āditya-varman[68], who had succeeded in carving out a small principality in the Ceded districts. Vikramāditya crushed the efforts of all these claimants and formally crowned himself as emperor in the latter half of A.D. 654. A record dated in his third regnal year claims that he had become the exclusive repository of the royal power,[69] and thus once more re-established imperial unity. He formally took the imperial titles *Parameśvara* and *Mahārājādhirāja*.

When the enemy forces were driven out in the south, the re-establishment of the Chālukya overlordship in Central and Northern Mahārāshṭra, old Hyderabad State, and Western Madhya Pradesh could not have presented any difficulties. It is true that some feudatories ruling in portions of this territory had become independent.,[70] but they again accepted the Chālukya overlordship, when Vikramāditya succeeded in driving out invaders. We find all these territories re-occupied, and a new viceroyalty established in southern Gujarat at Nausari by *c.* A.D. 660. The new Gujarat viceroy was Vikramāditya's loyal and capable brother Jayasiṁha-varman; we find him gratefully recognising his debt to his elder brother in his own charter.[71]

Vikramāditya, however, was not content merely to re-establish his authority over the wide empire of his father. His name as well as other *birudas* like *raṇarasika* 'delighting in war', *urubalaskandha* 'of mighty army,' and *rājamalla* 'wrestler among kings' aptly indicate his ambitious nature, pining for fresh military laurels. He decided to start a war of revenge against the Pallavas.

The events of this new Chālukya-Pallava war are difficult to arrange chronologically, as the records are partly undated and partly conflicting. The victories of the Chālukyas over the Pallavas can be reasonably placed between A.D. 670 and 675. The Pallava victories, however, which are no less historical, cannot be dated, and so the narrative becomes obscure. If we assume that the Pallava victories were won before A.D. 670 we shall have to conclude that the Pallava king Mahendra-varman II, who succeeded Narasiṁha-varman, invaded once more the Chālukya dominions. He scored some initial victories, but was driven out by Vikramāditya, who eventually carried the war in the enemy's country and succeeded in capturing Kāñchī. The final victory would, in this case, lie with the Chālukyas. Such, however,

68 He claims to be the favourite son of Pulakeśin who had by his own prowess conquered the whole earth. He is also seen claiming for himself full imperial title in Karnūl plates issued in the first year of his reign. *IA*, XI, p. 67.

69 Cf. *kṛitaikādhishṭhitāśesharājyabhāraḥ*, Karnūl pl. *JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 235.

70 Eg. Vijayavarman and Nikumbhaśakti in southern Gujarat. See *DKD*, pp. 359-61

71 Cf. *Jyāyasā bhrātrā saṁvardhitavibhūtiḥ*, Nausari plates, *EI*, VIII, p. 232.

does not seem to have been the case. Vijayāditya, the grandson of Vikramāditya, is known to have helped him in defeating the enemies nearer home, when the grandfather was engaged in the southern expedition. This would suggest that the victories scored by the Pallavas were won in the course of a counter-offensive taken some time after A.D. 675. Vijayāditya was probably too young to participate in military campaigns 10 years earlier.

Though naturally burning with a desire to take revenge, Vikramāditya must have spent a few years in making the necessary preparations; for, recent experience had shown that the Pallava power could not be lightly treated with impunity. The preparations were probably completed by A.D. 668, when Vikramāditya launched his offensive. The Gaṅgas, who had warmly supported his efforts to reconquer the paternal dominion, must have given valuable advanced bases for his army to invade the Pallava territory. Vikramāditya's younger brother, Jayasiṁha-varman, the governor of southern Gujarat, sent detachments to participate in the expedition under the command of his crown-prince Śryāśraya Śīlāditya.[72] Who was ruling at Kāñchī when Vikramāditya undertook this expedition in *c.* A.D. 668 is not definitely known. The Gadval plates of Vikramāditya, issued in A.D. 674, claim that Vikramāditya had pulverised the fame of Narasiṁha-varman, dissolved the power of Mahendra-varman and subdued Parameśvara-varman.[73] It is probable that Mahendra-varman II, and not Narasiṁha-varman, was ruling at Kāñchī when Vikramāditya launched his attack against it in *c.* A.D. 668.

Vikramāditya's blow was swift and decisive, and there is no doubt whatsoever that he captured Kāñchī, the Pallava capital. He remained in effective possession of this city for five or six years. One of his records shows that his victorious army was encamped at Mallivūr (Malaivūr in Wandiwash *taluk*) to the west of Kāñchī in A.D. 670-1,[74] and another record proves that four years later its camp was moved further south to Uragapura in Trichinopoly district, on the southern bank of the Kāvéri.[75]

Mahendra-varman had a short reign, and it is therefore not improbable that his life was cut short in this war. He was succeeded by his son Parameśvara-varman, who had to face the task of driving out

72 *MAR*. 1923, p. 83 no. 72. Śīlāditya, mentioned in this record, cannot be Harshavardhana as suggested by Shama Sastri, who has edited the record (cf. *IHQ*, V, p. 235).

73 *EI*, X, p. 105. See Ch.-XII on Pallavas for full explanation of data briefly noticed here.

74 *MAR*. 1939, No. 30. Honnūr pl.

75 Gadval plates; *EI*. X, p. 105. Hultzsch's view that Uragapura is to be identified with Negapattam is untenable, because it is not situated on the Kāvérī.

the invader and reconquering his patrimony. The claim in the Chālukya records that Parameśvara-varman was subdued by policy[76] and made to bow at the feet of the conqueror,[77] may no doubt suggest that he played the part of a meek and loyal feudatory. But such was not the case. He marshalled his resources and soon organized a counter-offensive. This, however, took more than five or six years, for Parameśvara-varman had to face the hostility of some of his southern neighbours also—like the Pāṇḍya king Arikeśarin—who were not unwilling to benefit by his discomfiture.

Vikramāditya's army was not lying idle during the period of five or six years when it was in effective occupation of Kāñchī. Some Chālukya records claim that Vikramāditya had shattered the power of the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas, and the Keralas.[78] It is thus clear that Vikramāditya was planning further conquests southwards, while encamped at Kāñchī, and may have scored some victories against the Pāṇḍyas and Keralas. These, however, were probably not very substantial, for there is no evidence to show that the Chālukya army occupied any territory to the south of the Trichinopoly district.

The effective occupation of Kāñchī for about five years and the successes obtained in the raids against the southern kingdoms had produced a false sense of security in Vikramāditya. He had underrated the power of organization and resistance of Parameśvara-varman, the Pallava king in exile. When, therefore, Parameśvara-varman launched a sudden attack against him, he was taken by surprise. The critical battle, which was the turning point in the war, was fought at Paruvaḷanallūr in the Lālgudi *taluk* of the Trichinopoly district. Vikramāditya was taken completely by surprise; his camp was thrown into disorder and he had to beat a precipitate retreat, 'covered merely with a rag', if we are to accept the Pallava records at their face value.[79] There can, however, be no doubt that the battle was a decisive one; it permanently drove out the army of occupation from the Pallava kingdom, inflicting fairly heavy losses upon it both in men and materials.

While Vikramāditya was slowly withdrawing his army from the distant Trichinopoly district, fresh troubles arose nearer home. The news of the disaster must have induced some lukewarm feudatories to declare independence. Parameśvara-varman seized the opportunity to make the confusion worse confounded by sending some crack divi-

76 *EI*, X, p. 105.

77 It is also necessary to note that this claim is for the first time made in the records of Vikramāditya's son: see *IA*, XIX, p. 149. His own records do not refer to this feat.

78 Cf. *IA*, VI, p. 86.

79 *SII*, I, p. 149; II, p. 370.

sions under an able general to attack the enemy's capital; for there is a clear reference in some Pallava records to Parameśvara-varman pressing upon the city of Raṇarasika, i.e. Vikramāditya.[80] The crown-prince Vinayāditya, and his son Vijayāditya, who were in charge of the home administration, proved equal to the task and soon convinced the rebels that a repetition of the events following the fall of Bādāmi in *c.* 643 was impossible. Several Chālukya records compare the overthrow of the invading force by Kumāra Vinayāditya to the feat of Śaṅkara in shattering the Asura army.[81] Whether the capital was really threatened, as claimed by the Pallava records, we do not know. But for some time the Pallava counter-invasion appeared a serious menace, creating unrest and commotion throughout the kingdom. The crown-prince and his youthful son, however, soon brought the situation under complete control, to the great relief of the aged emperor.[82]

The Chālukya-Pallava war, which seems to have lasted for about ten years and must have caused considerable bloodshed and misery, ultimately benefited neither party. Vikramāditya could not maintain his foothold in Tamil country and the Pallavas also had to retire from Karnātaka. It produced, however, one good result: it drove home to each party the utter futility of the struggle. In any case, neither is known to have invaded his opponent's territory for nearly half a century.

7. VINAYĀDITYA (A.D. 681-696)

Vikramāditya was succeeded by his son Vinayāditya some time between the 22nd of June and the 4th of July, 681.[83] Besides his father's titles *Mahārājādhirāja, Parameśvara* and *Bhaṭṭāraka,* he also took the title of *rājāśraya*, 'the asylum of kings'. He was probably nearing fifty at the time of his accession.

A number of victories have been attributed to him. He is said to have reduced to subjection the Pallavas, Cholas, Pāṇḍyas, and Keralas. Evidently the reference is to his success in repelling the foreign invaders, who had entered into Chālukya kingdom towards the close of his father's reign. It is very doubtful whether any fresh conflict took place between the Chālukyas and their southern neighbours during the reign of Vinayāditya. The statement that the kings of

80 *SII*, I, p. 12 v. 5.

81 *EI*, XXV, p. 23.

82 *IA*, VI, p. 86; IX, p. 126.

83 As suggested by Dayyamdinne plates, *EI*, XXII, p. 25. Togarcheḍu and Jejuri plates, however, show that he commenced to rule some time between October 678 and July 679 A.D. *See IA*, VI, p. 86; *EI*, XIX, p. 62. It is not at present possible to reconcile this conflicting evidence.

Persia, Ceylon and other countries used to pay him tribute is perhaps more rhetorical than historical. The defeat of the Mālavas and the Haihayas probably refers to some skirmishes on the northern frontier of his kingdom.[84]

Copper-plates issued by his son claim that Vinayāditya had defeated the overlord of Northern India and won as trophy *pālidhvaja*[85] and several other emblems of the imperial status. It appears that his crown-prince Vijayāditya had participated in the northern campaign and accidentally fallen into the hands of the enemy, who suddenly counter-attacked while retiring. The crown-prince, however, managed to effect his escape and defeated the enemy once more and delivered to his father the emblems of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, *pālidhvaja*, *ḍhakkā* (drum), five musical instruments, rubies, elephants and other booty.[86] The name of the northern emperor with whom Vinayāditya came into conflict is not given, and it is not easy to identify him. He may be king Vajraṭa, who is known to have been defeated by the Chālukyas. But neither the identity of Vajraṭa nor the locality of his kingdom is definitely known. Mirashi identifies him with Śīlāditya III of Valabhī[87] and this is quite likely, though not certain. It has been also suggested that this king of Northern India might be either Ādityasena of Magadha who adopted imperial titles, or Yaśo-varman of Kanauj, both of whom are credited with military conquests in the South (cf. Chapter XXI). But this is not proved by reliable evidence, and on the whole no satisfactory solution can be offered at present about the identity of Vinayāditya's northern opponent.

Several grants of Vinayāditya have come to light. They produce the general impression that the kingdom was prosperous during his rule, and show that the king was taking active interest in administration, touring from place to place for the purpose of inspection.

8. VIJAYĀDITYA (A.D. 696-733).

Vinayāditya was succeeded by his son Vijayāditya, some time in the rainy season of A.D. 696. He was known by the pompous title *samastabhuvanāśraya* 'the asylum of the whole universe'. He had the

84 *Pallava-Kalabhra-Kerala-Haihaya-Nīḷa-Mālava-Pāṇḍyādayo yena Alūpa-Gaṅgādayaścha maulaih samam bhrityatāṁ nītah*. *IA*. VII, pp. 302-3. *Karadīkrita-Kamera-Pārasīka-Siṁhalādi-dvīpādhipasya*. Nerur pl. *IA*, IX, p. 127. R. G. Bhandarkar has suggested that Kamera may be Kerala and Pārasīkas may be Syrians settled on the Malabar coast. ***EHD*, p. 98.**

85 This was a huge composite banner, constituted of 1080 flags with ten different ensigns. ***IA*. XIV, p. 104.**

86 See Nerur plates, dated A.D 700. *IA*. IX, p. 128.

87 *IHQ*. XX, pp. 181-88, 358-59.

advantage of being trained under his grandfather and father, and is known to have taken an active part in the campaigns of both, to which reference has been already made.[88] He reigned for 37 years, the longest among the early Chālukya rulers; but his reign is hardly marked by any important political incident known to us. His records show him touring from place to place, obviously for administrative purpose; they also show how the old feudatories like the Bāṇas and Telugu-Chōḍas continued loyal to him. But neither his copper-plates nor those of his successors show that he ever undertook any military expedition after his accession. He seems to have been more interested in building than in fighting. The Saṅgameśvara temple at Paṭṭadakal, which is rightly described as a magnificent stone structure, was built by him, and was originally known as Vijayeśvara after him. It is one of the early examples of the so-called Chālukya style of architecture.

Besides his queen or queens he had his mistresses also; one of them, Vināpotigal by name, who describes herself as 'the soul's darling of Vijāyāditya', is known to have performed the *Hiranyagarbhadāna* ritual and offered a ruby seat with a silver umbrella to a deity in a shrine at Mahākūṭa. Vijayāditya had a younger sister named Kuṅkuma-mahādevī, who was a patron of Jainism.[89]

During the latter part of his reign, Vijayāditya closely associated his son Vikramāditya in the administration.[90] One set of Nerur plates specifically refers to the crown-prince Vikramāditya after mentioning the reigning emperer, his father; a grant registered in a Kanarese record at Paṭṭadakal is in the name of both.[91] These records are unfortunately undated; but an inscription from Lakshmeśvara shows that the crown-prince had been entrusted with the important power of sanctioning constitutions of the village councils and municipalities. and determining the rights and duties of the villagers and government officers.[92] Unfortunately, this record is not well preserved; otherwise it would have thrown considerable light upon the system of local government under the Chālukyas. Another inscription, discovered at Uḷchala[92a] shows that the crown-prince Vikramāditya defeated the

88 The military expedition in the North during which he had accidentally fallen in the hands of the enemy, was an event in his father's reign, and not his own. Cf. *mātaṅgajādīn-pitṛiśāt-kurvann-aparaih palāyamānair āsādya katham-api vidhivaśād-āpatitopi. IA*, IX, p. 128.

89 A Jain temple built by her existed at Lakshmeśvara in the eleventh century; *IA*, XVIII, p. 38.

90 *IA*, IX, p. 133.

91 *IA*, X, p. 166.

92 *EI*, XIV, p. 188.

92a *Ancient India* No. 5, 'Ten Years of Epigraphy'.

Pallava king Parameśvara-varman in or shortly before A.D. 731.

9. VIKRMĀDITYA II (A.D. 733-744).

Vijayāditya was succeeded by Vikramāditya II in A.D. 733. He ruled only for 12 years but his reign is crowded with a number of important events.

We have seen already how Vikramāditya I had appointed his younger brother Jayasiṁha-varman to rule over southern Gujarat. His capital was Nausari and he had a semi-independent status. Whether Jayasiṁha's eldest son, *Yuvarāja* Śryasraya Śilāditya ascended the throne and had a short reign, or whether he predeceased his father, we do not know. In 731-32, we find Javāsraya Mangalarāja, Śilāditya's younger brother, ruling at Nausari.[93] Very soon thereafter he was succeeded by his younger brother Avanijanāśraya Pulakeśirāja.[94] Pulakeśin could hardly have been less than 55 at the time of his accession in *c.* 735. He was, however, a remarkably capable, energetic and brave ruler. Soon after his accession Gujarat had to face an invasion by the Arabs of Sindh. A number of kingdoms in Kachchha, Kāthiāwār and northern Gujarat were swept away by the Muslim avalanche, and it approached the outskirts of Nausari, the Chālukya capital in Gujarat. Pulakeśin, however, was not daunted by the fate of his northern neighbours. He resolutely faced the invaders, repulsed them with heavy loss, and thus saved Gujarat and the Deccan from the Muslim menace.[95] Whether Pulakeśin received any help from Vikramāditya II, we do not know. Probably the Chālukya emperor did send imperial contingents to help his kinsman at Nausari, whose resources were obviously very much limited. Vikramāditya must have been watching the outcome of the engagement with keen interest; when Pulakeśin successfully hurled back the Arab army flushed with a series of victories, Vikramāditya conveyed his appreciation by conferring a number of significant titles upon him: they were *Dakshiṇāpathasādhāra* (Pillar of the Deccan), *Chālukyakulālaṁkāra* (Ornament of the Chālukya Family), *prithivīvallabha* (Beloved of the Earth), *anivartakanirvartya* (Repeller of the Unrepelled) and *avanijanāśraya* (Asylum of the People of the whole World).[96] Doubtless he must have also expressed

93 *JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 5; *IA*, XIII, p. 75.

94 That Pulakeśirāja, one of whose elder brothers Śryāśraya had taken an active part in the campaign against Kāñchī in *c.* A.D 670, should succeed to the throne after the reigns of his two elder brothers in *c* 735 appears very improbable, but the evidence is conclusive. He may have been born to Jayasiṁha in his old age.

95 *HIED*, I, p. 109; *BG*, I, i, p. 109. Cf. also, *infra*, Ch. XIX.

96 Nausari plates, *Vienna Or. Congress*, Aryan Section, p. 230.

his appreciation by giving him valuable presents and perhaps by increasing the extent of his principality.

The truce of half a century existing between the Chālukyas and Pallavas was, as noted above, broken by the successful invasion of Pallava dominions by Vikramāditya II while yet a crown-prince. The hostility was continued throughout his reign. An undated Paṭṭadakal inscription of his queen Lokamahādevī describes him as a ruler who had captured Kāñchī three times.[97] Details of the invasions are, however given to us only in the copper-plate grants issued by his son.[98] We learn from them that Vikramāditya came to the conclusion that it was high time for him to crush the power of the Pallava dynasty which was the 'natural' enemy of his house. He, therefore, launched an attack upon Kāñchī, leading his forces to the capital through Toṇḍaimaṇḍala.[99] The Pallava king Nandipóta-varman came out to meet him, but was signally defeated. He fled from the battle-field leaving behind his *khaṭvāṅga*-banner, martial musical instruments known as *kaṭumukha* and *samudraghosha*, a large number of elephants of high breed, and heaps of costly jewels. The place of this decisive engagement is not known, but it could not have been far from Kāñchī. Nothing could now impede the conqueror's entry into the Pallava capital. Vikramāditya, however, was one of those rare conquerors, who believe in humane warfare. With a rare magnanimity he spared his enemy's capital and signalised his entry into it by giving large charities to temples and Brāhmaṇas. King Narasiṁhapóta had recently built a magnificent Śiva temple at his capital, named Rājasiṁheśvara, and given it costly presents. The conqueror ordered all these gifts to be laid before him, and surprised the temple authorities by returning them to the deity. Vikramāditya, however, took his revenge in a subtle and refined fashion. He got a Kannada inscription engraved on a pillar of the Rājasiṁheśvara temple, describing how he had conquered Kāñchī, without destroying it, and how, having inspected the cash and ornaments belonging to the temple of Rājasiṁheśvara, he gave them back again to the god. The inscription concludes: 'Those who destroy this incription and the stability of the king's charity shall enter the world of those who have killed the men of the *ghaṭikā* (Brāhmaṇa teachers of the college) of the city.'[100] It

97 *IA*, X, p. 166.

98 *EI*, IX, p. 201; V, p. 202. This record also states that the irresistible valour of Vikramāditya caused distress to the Pāṇḍya, Chola, Kerala, Kalabhra and other kings. This merely refers to the awe inspired by the victory of the Chālukya emperor in the far south, and does not necessarily prove any expeditions against the kings enumerated here.

99 Gaṅga king Koṅguṇi Arasa co-operated in this expedition.

100 *EI*, III, p. 360.

is this clever curse at the end which probably prevented the record being destroyed by the Pallavas when they reconquered the city.

Vikramāditya did not aim at permanently occupying the Pallava capital. Probably, Narasiṁha-varman's Pallava inscription at Bādāmi, commemorating his conquest of the Chālukya capital, was rankling in his heart, and he felt quite satisfied when he had paid back the Pallavas in the same coin by getting his own conquest of Kāñchī engraved in a Kannaḍa inscription in the most famous temple of the city. He seems to have soon returned to Bādāmi after a short occupation of the Pallava capital.[101] The date of this event is not definitely known, but may be placed at *c.* A.D. 739.

A few years later Vikramāditya formally appointed his son Kīrti-varman as the crown-prince. The latter was anxious to commemorate the event by a fresh military exploit and requested his father to despatch him to overthrow the Kāñchī ruler, the 'natural' enemy of his house. Vikramāditya conceded the request and a fresh expedition was launched against the Pallava capital. The Chālukya records simply claim that the Pallava king,[102] unable to offer an open fight, shut himself in a fort, and was harassed and discomfited there by the Chālukya crown-prince.[103] Obviously, Kīrti-varman could achieve nothing particularly remarkable, and returned after a show of force.

Names of two of the queens of Vikramāditya are known; the senior one was Lokamahādevī and the junior one was her younger sister Trailokyamahādevī. The crown-prince Kīrti-varman was the son of the latter. The queens were princesses of the Haihaya family ruling near Jabbalpur, but the name of their father is not known. Each one of them built a temple at Paṭṭadakal known after her name. Of these the temple of Lokeśvarabhaṭṭāraka still exists, but is now known as the temple of Virūpāksha. The temple of Trailokyeśvara, built by the second queen, cannot be satisfactorily identified at present. Guṇḍa, the architect of the former temple, was a famous personage, who was given the titles of *tribhuvanāchārya* ('preceptor of the three worlds'), *anivaritāchārya* ('unrepulsed teacher') and '*teṁkaṇadeśeya sutradhari*' ('the architect of the Deccan'). He had built several palaces and temples, and secured some privileges for the members of his order from the Chālukya emperor.[104]

101 Pallava records claim no counter-victory for Nandipota-varman against the Chālukyas; we may, therefore, take it that the victory of Vikramāditya was a decisive one.

102 He is not named, but obviously he must be Nandi-varman Pallavamalla, the contemporary Kāñchī ruler.

103 *EI*, IX, p. 203.

104 *IA*, X, pp. 164-5. For some other temples built at Aihoḷe and Lakshmeśvar, see *IA*, VII, p. 106; VIII, p. 286.

10. KĪRTI-VARMAN II (A.D. 744—c. 757)

Vikramāditya was succeeded by his crown-prince Kīrti-varman in A.D. 744. Nṛipasiṁha, 'Lion among kings', was his peculiar personal title. The prestige of the Chālukyas was at its height at the accession of the new king. The entire Deccan was under their overlordship, the power of the Pallavas had been effectively broken, and the Arab army priding on its invincibility had been repulsed. The new king was able, energetic, and conscientious in the discharge of his duties. In short, everything seemed to indicate a further spell of glorious career for the house of the Chālukyas for several decades. But the unexpected happened in the reign of Kīrti-varman II; within a decade of his accession, the Chālukya empire was completely shattered.

The danger came from quite an unexpected quarter. It was neither the hereditary and natural enemy of the family, the Pallavas, nor any of the old feudatories like the Sindas, the Sendrakas, the Āḷūpas, the Bāṇas, or the Gaṅgas, that overwhelmed the imperial Chālukya power. A new feudatory house, known as Rāshṭrakūṭa, was slowly rising into prominence in Berar; it was its energetic chief Dantidurga who dealt the first decisive blow to the Chālukya empire some time before A.D. 753. His descent from a Chālukya princess had aroused imperial ambitions in him, and it seems very probable that he had co-operated with his Chālukya confeudatory Pulakeśin of Nausari in repelling the Arab invasion. At any rate by A.D. 742 we find him assuming new titles *prithivīvallabha* and *khaḍgāvaloka*,[105] which may have been conferred upon him by his feudal lord Vikramāditya II. It seems very likely that Dantidurga accompanied the crown-prince Kīrti-varman in his raid against the Pallavas. The death of Vikramāditya II in 744 was probably the real starting point in the execution of the imperial plans of Dantidurga. He, however, was a shrewd politician and decided to effect the expansion of his power without coming into conflict with the Chālukyas. He, therefore, annexed the Gurjara kingdom of Nandipura and also brought Malwa under his control. He gradually brought the greater part of Madhya Pradesh within his sphere of influence; most of this territory was a kind of no man's land in those days. Kīrti-varman probably realized by this time the danger from this feudatory and decided to check him. But Dantidurga was more than a match for him. He attacked Kīrti-varman quite unawares and secured a decisive victory which put him in effective possession of central Mahārāshṭra before the beginning of A.D. 754. Kīrti-varman, however, still continued to control Karnāṭaka and made fresh efforts to reassert his authority. In A.D. 757 we find

105 *EI*, XXV, p. 25.

him encamped in the Sholapur district, obviously contemplating a march against the Rāshṭrakūṭas, whose ambitious king Dantidurga had recently died and been succeeded by his uncle Kṛishṇa. The new king, however, was equally capable and completed the work of his predecessor by conquering Karnāṭaka also and extending his power right up to Gaṅgavāḍi or Mysore. Nothing more is heard of Kīrti-varman after A.D. 757, and later Chālukya records admit that the sun of the imperial glory of the Chālukya family set with him. Some Chālukya chieftains occasionally come in our view during the eighth and ninth centuries. But most of them were petty chieftains ruling over a few villages and probably unconnected with the Bādāmi family.

Chapter Sixteen

THE RĀSHṬRAKŪṬAS

1. ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

The name Rāshṭrakūṭa means chief of the *rāshṭra,* division or kingdom as the case may be. It occurs in the inscriptions of several dynasties from the fourth century A.D. as the designation of a class of provincial officials functioning under the control of the central government. It is not unlikely, though there is no proof of it, that the line of kings who bore the dynastic name 'Rāshṭrakūṭa' originally belonged to this class of provincial officials. The Raṭhikas of the Aśokan inscriptions have been regarded sometimes as the ancestors of the Rāshṭrakūṭas; but the Raṭhikas of the Mauryan epoch were a tribe, and there is no evidence to connect them with the Rāshṭrakūṭas across eight centuries in time. There can be no connection also between the Kannaḍa-Telugu caste name Reḍḍi or Raḍḍi and this dynasty, for, as Fleet rightly pointed out,[1] 'the earliest traces of the Rāshṭrakūṭas are obtained from Central India and the more northern parts of the Bombay Presidency, where, now at all events, the Reḍḍi caste does not seem to exist.'

The Rāshṭrakūṭas were of Kannaḍa origin, and their inscriptions clearly indicate that Kannaḍa was their mother tongue, though in State documents they made a very large use of the Sanskrit language. One title which was assumed by the Rāshṭrakūṭa princes of both the main line and of the subordinate branches may well be taken to contain the clue to their original home. That title is *Laṭṭalūra-puravareśvara,* the eminent lord of the city of Laṭṭalūra. Laṭṭalūra has been identified by Fleet with Lāṭūr in the Bidar district of the former Hyderabad State.[2] We may compare the similar titles which connected the Telugu-Choḍas with Uṛaiyūr, and the Kaliṅga-Gaṅgas with Kolāhalapura (Kolar). In relatively late copper-plate grants beginning from the Sanjan plates (No. XIX)[3] the dynasty claims descent from the line-

1 *BG,* I, ii, p. 384.

2 *EI,* VII, p. 186 f. Laṭṭalūr is the same as Raṭṭalur, the town of Raṭṭas.

3 The Roman numerals within brackets refer to the serial number of inscriptions in the list given at the end of this chapter.

age (*vaṁśa*) of Yadu. In grants of the reign of Govinda III (e.g. Nos. IX and X) there occurs a verse which states that the family of the Rāshṭrakūṭas became proof against assaults of enemies after the birth of Govinda just like the Yādava *vaṁśa* after the birth of Kṛishṇa (Madhuripu). The comparison was obviously suggested to a court-poet by the name Govinda of the monarch whose *praśasti* he was composing, and about 60 years later it seems to have given rise to the idea of connecting the Rāshṭrakūṭa line with the Yaduvaṁśa. Other details of the myth may be culled from other grants. Thus we learn that the Rāshṭrakūṭas belonged to the Sātyaki branch of the Yaduvaṁśa (No. XXI). Some records introduce an eponymous ancestor Raṭṭa, himself said to be the son of Tuṅga or a line of Tuṅgas (Nos. XXIV, XXV, XXVI). These names are transparent inventions, belonging to 'a period when all the great families of Southern India were devising Purāṇic pedigrees.'[4]

The Rāshṭrakūṭas of Malkhed had the *Pālidhvaja* banner and the Garuḍa-*lāñchhana*. They were heralded in public by the sound of an instrument called Tivali or Trivali. They had both Śiva and Vishṇu as family gods, and the images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā were among their insignia. These and the *Pālidhvaja* were adopted by the Chālukyas of Bādāmi as symbols of their victory against north Indian kings and might have been taken from them by the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

Western Chālukya inscriptions, beginning from the Kauthem grant of A.D. 1009, state that Jayasiṁha I, the founder of the Bādāmi line of Chālukyas, established his power after overthrowing an early Rāshṭrakūṭa king, Indra, the son of Kṛishṇa. But of this achievement none of the several inscriptions of the Bādāmi period shows any knowledge. This early empire of the Rāshṭrakūṭas must therefore be treated as a myth, and the attempt of some modern scholars to treat it as history cannot be regarded as successful.

The earliest ruling family of the Rāshṭrakūṭas so far known is that founded by Mānāṅka, mentioned above (p. 52). Another Rāshṭrakūṭa family ruling in the Betul district of the Madhya Pradesh will be discussed in the next chapter. A Rāshṭrakūṭa Govindarāja, son of Śivarāja, acting as *vijñapti* (petitioner), is mentioned in the Narayana plates (A.D. 743)[5] of Chālukya Vikramāditya II of Bādāmi. This prince was clearly a feudatory or official under the Chālukyan emperor. Lastly we have the Antroli-Chharoli plates (No. III) bearing the Garuḍa seal dated A.D. 757, also belonging apparently to a collateral branch of the Malkhed line holding sway in the Lāṭa country. These

4 *BG*, I, ii, p. 383.
5 *BISMJ*, X, pp. 9 ff.

plates mention four generations: Karka I, his son Dhruva, his son Govinda, and his son Karka II, who issued the grant in A.D. 757, and was therefore the contemporary of Dantidurga, the founder of the imperial Rāshṭrakūṭa line. The exact relation of these kings to the Malkhed line cannot be decided with certainty, though it is not impossible that Karka I of this charter was identical with the grandfather of Dantidurga himself.

II. RISE AND EXPANSION

We now come to the main line of which history must regard Dantidurga (he whose elephant is his fortress) as the founder. Inscriptions usually give the names of three generations of his ancestors while one engraved in the Daśāvatāra cave at Ellora (No. IV) adds the names of two earlier generations giving a total of five predecessors of Dantidurga. The descent of Dantidurga would then be as follows:

Danti-varman
|
Indra I (called also Prichchhakarāja in No. XIX, v. 3)
|
Govindarāja
|
Kakka I
|
Indra II
|
Dantidurga.

It may be noted that chronology offers no difficulties in our treating the list of kings given in the Daśāvatāra cave inscription as a continuation of the line ruling in the Betul district. The Tivarkhed plates (No. I) of Nannarāja Yuddhāsura[5a], the last of the four kings of that family, were issued from Achalapura, Elichpur in Berar, which may be accepted, as we shall see, as a good starting point for the career of Dantidurga and for the single achievement of his father recorded in the inscriptions. That achievement was the capture by Indra of the Chālukya princess Bhavagaṇā whom he married by force on the battle-field of Kheṭaka (Khaira) (Nos. VI, v. 11 and XIX, v. 7). The princess must have belonged to the Gujarat branch of the Chālukyas, but we know nothing of the occasion for the battle. The event may be placed somewhere about A.D. 725. For the rest,

5a A record held to be spurious by V. V. Mirashi, *EI*, XXVIII, p. 3.

Dantidurga's predecessors are only names to us as no definite achievement of any of them is mentioned in the inscriptions.

Dantidurga, occasionally called also Danti-varman, had the title *khaḍgāvaloka* (he whose glances are as keen as the edge of a sword) (No. II), and was also known as Vairamegha (Kaḍaba plates) which sounds more like his personal name than a title. In the Ellora plates[6] (A.D. 742), the earliest record of the reign. he bears the titles *pṛithivīvallabha* and *khaḍgāvaloka,* and is already in occupation of Ellora. His titles may imply that he too had a hand in repulsing the Arab invasion of Lāṭa and was, like Pulakeśin (above, p. 435), honoured with titles by Chālukya suzerain Vikramāditya II about A.D. 733-34. After his overthrow of the last Chālukya ruler of Bādāmi called Kīrti-varman II (p. 438), he assumed full imperial rank and described himself in the Samangadh plates (Jan. A.D. 754) (No. II[6a]) as *Pṛithivīvallabha Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka.* That record says that his elephants tore up the banks of the rivers Mahī, Mahānadī and Revā; that out of regard for his mother he enabled her to make grants of land in each village in his territory comprising four hundred thousand villages; and that he acquired supreme sovereignty by the easy conquest of the Vallabha, i.e. Chālukya Kīrtivarman II, by quickly overcoming with only a small force the boundless Karṇāṭaka army which had proved its mettle in defeating the rulers of Kāñchī, Kerala, Chola and Pāṇḍya, besides Harsha and Vajraṭa of Northern India. The undated and fragmentary Daśāvatāra cave-inscription (No. IV) ascribes to him victories against Vallabha, the lord of all kings,[7] Kāñchī, Kaliṅga, Kosala, and Śrīśailadeśa, besides the conquest of the *Rājās* of Mālava, Lāṭa and Ṭaṅka. The same record states that he gave presents at Ujjain on a liberal scale to *Rājās* and to the poor. It adds that the king's camp was located (at Ujjain ?) in a Gurjara palace.

Later inscriptions contain clever elaborations of these themes. To cite only a few of these: Dantidurga is said to have performed a *Hiraṇyagarbha* at Ujjain with the Gurjara ruler and others acting as his door-keepers (*Pratihāras*), an obvious play upon the dynastic name of the Gurjara ruler (No. XIX). Again the Lakshmī of the Chālukyas is said to have noticed the marks of the conch and the discus on his hands and to have approached him of her own accord abandoning the ocean, i.e. her orignal abode, for the Chālukya dynasty. And in a verse of untranslatable *double entendre* we get a clue to Dantidurga's strategy of indirect approach to his objective,

6 *EI*, XXV, p. 25.

6a The genuineness of the record has been doubted, *EI*, XXVIII, p. 7.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

for he is said to have first attempted to lay his hand on the *Jaghanya-deśa* and then on the *Madhyadeśa* before grasping the *Kāñchīpada* of the Earth (maiden) (No. XXI). Lastly, Dantidurga is said to have transplanted the creeper Lakshmī from the basin (*ālavāla*) of the Chālukyas to his own family where it was watered by the rut of war-elephants (No. XXV).

There is nowhere in our sources any clear indication of the chronological order in which these campaigns were undertaken by Dantidurga. The order observed in the Samangadh plates (No. II), the initial location of the family in Berar, and the verse cited above relating to the strategy followed by Dantidurga, may all lead us to suppose that the overthrow of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and the assumption of the imperial position were among the last achievements of this talented and warlike monarch. Lāṭa and Mālava were in a disturbed condition consequent on the Arab impact, and Dantidurga must have taken advantage of the confusion to aggrandize his own power. That may explain the references to the *rājās* of Mālava, Lāṭa and Ṭaṅka, the presence of the king at Ujjain, and his performance of a *Hiraṇyagarbha* at that place. Success against Kosala and Kaliṅga in the east might have come next, but we lack all knowledge of detail. Lastly he struck southward, making a show of force in the Śrīśaila country, then under the Telugu-Choḍas, and going down still further south to Kāñchī, the capital of the hereditary enemies of the Chālukyas, viz the Pallavas. Dantidurga's invasion of Kāñchī is mentioned by Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār, and we have every reason to believe that after an initial demonstration of force, Dantidurga struck up an alliance with Nandi-varman Pallavamalla to whom he gave his daughter Revā in marriage. Revā became the chief queen of Pallavamalla, and her son Danti-varman succeeded his father on the Pallava throne.

All the operations of Dantidurga are thus seen to have been laid on the outlying territories of the extensive Chālukyan empire and calculated to sap its strength quickly, before the final assault could be delivered at the heart of the empire. Kīrti-varman II was no match to the bold and astute Dantidurga, and as the Chālukya records themselves put it, 'in his reign the Rājyaśrī of the Chālukyas disappeared from the face of the earth'. Kīrti-varman found that he had lost the battle before he even suspected that it was coming. In fact all indications point to the progressive attenuation of Chālukyan power before Dantidurga's aggrandizement, rather than a sudden military disaster of an overwhelming character. That seems to be the meaning of the easy victory which Dantidurga claims to have won against the Chālukyas. Kīrti-varman continued to rule with diminished glory for some years after the date of Dantidurga's Saman-

gadh charter (No. II), and perhaps did not quit the stage until the reign of Dantidurga's successor Krishṇa I. His Vakkaleri plates, which record a grant made by him from the victorious camp at Bhaṇḍāraga-viṭṭage on the north bank of the Bhīmā river, is dated in the eleventh year of his reign, A.D. 755-6; and that is the last we hear of him. Dantidurga describes his territory as comprising four lacs of villages. In later times the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom was reckoned to include seven and a half lacs. Probably Dantidurga succeeded in making his sway effective only over a little more than one half of the Chālukyan empire of Bādāmi. The conquest was completed as we shall see by his successor.

Lāṭa is included among the conquests of Dantidurga. But from the Antroli-Chharoli plates of A.D. 757 (No. III) we see that Lāṭa was under Rāshṭrakūṭa Karka II in A.D. 757, and presumably the ancestors of Karka for at least three generations ruled before him in the same area. Karka II moreover bears the imperial titles *Mahārājādhirāja, Parameśvara* and *Paramabhaṭṭāraka.* It may be that Dantidurga's campaign against Lāṭa was directed against this ruler and that he acknowledged Dantidurga's supremacy for a time, and subsequently made an attempt to withdraw his allegiance and set up as an independent power. We shall return to this question in the history of the next reign.

How long Dantidurga lived after the date of the Samangadh plates (No. II, 5 January A.D. 754) is only a matter for conjecture, and there occur different statements in the inscriptions regarding the manner in which Dantidurga's reign came to an end. Some records (Paithan, Alas)[8] simply state that when Dantidurga died his uncle Krishṇa, the son of Kakka, succeeded him on the throne. A verse in the Baroda plates of A.D. 812-13 (No. XII) states that Krishṇarāja uprooted a member of his family who had taken to evil ways and began himself to rule the kingdom for the good of his family (*gotrahitāya*). Lastly the Karda plates (No. XXVIII) state that when Dantidurga died childless,[9] Krishṇarāja became king. Dantidurga was obviously a strong and able ruler who laid the foundations of a lasting empire, and it is difficult to believe that he was the wicked kinsman whom Krishna had to set aside before he assumed the sway himself. It may be inferred therefore that Dantidurga died childless, and that possibly there was a dispute between Krishṇa and another member of

8 *EI*, VI, p. 208; VII, p. 232.

9 Cf. *EC*, XI, Chitaldurg, 76. The Rāmeśvara stone inscription of Krishna III (*SII*, IX(i), No. 68) implies that Dantidurga died in battle while he was still young—*srassundarī-prārthite yāte yūni divam.*

the family, who sought the throne and succeeded in seizing it for a while, but whom Kṛishṇa overthrew easily because of his unpopularity.

The accession of Kṛishṇa may be placed in A.D. 756. He had the titles *Śubhatuṅga* (High in Prosperity) and *Akālavarsha* (Constant Rainer).[10] One of his first tasks was to complete the overthrow of the Chālukya power, and inscriptions (No. IX and XIX) say that he dragged the Chālukya Lakshmī to himself, and that he dispelled darkness, viz. the Chālukyas (No. XXII). The victory against the Chālukyas is not mentioned in the earliest record of the reign dated A.D. 758,[11] but it is not unlikely that the conquest had been completed earlier. In any event, as already noted, we hear of Chālukya Kīrti-varman II for the last time in A.D. 757.

Under Kṛishṇa I the newly established Rāshṭrakūṭa power, in spite of the difficulties it faced, expanded in all directions. The Bhāndak plates, A.D. 772 June (No. VI), show that the whole of western Madhya Pradesh had come under Kṛishṇa's rule by that time. In other inscriptions Kṛishṇa is said to have overcome Rāhappa by the strokes of his sharp sword and thereby gained the *Pālidhvaja* banner and the imperial title *Rājādhirāja Parameśvara*. The identity of Rāhappa with Kakka II of Lāṭa was suggested by Fleet long ago. If this is correct, Kṛishṇa's war against Rāhappa may be taken to mark the end of the first Lāṭa branch of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Rāhappa's identity or at least his close connection with Kīrti-varman II has also been suggested, and the accession of the *Pālidhvaja* and the imperial title as a result of the victory may be taken to support this. Southern Koṅkaṇa was also conquered and brought under his sway by Kṛishṇa who established Śaṇaphulla, the founder of the Silāhāra family of southern Koṅkaṇa, as his feudatory in that part of the empire.[12]

The expansion of the empire in the southern direction is attested by several inscriptions. The Telegaon plates of A.D. 768 (No. V) were issued from the king's camp at Manne in the heart of the Gaṅga territory. There is a stone inscription at Haṭṭimattūr,[13] Dharwar district, dated in Kṛishṇa's reign and recording the death of a couple of soldiers in a fight. There are a number of inscriptions dated in the reign of the Gaṅga king Śrīpurusha Muttarasa recording the death

10 Akālavarsha was rendered by Fleet into 'untimely rainer'. But verse 22 of the Bhāndak plates (No. VI) gives the real sense. It says: 'He was called Akālavarsha by the world as he always rained wealth on friends, arrows on enemies, love on young women and protection on the helpless.'

11. *BISM* plates: *BISMJ*. VIII, part ii, pp. 165-70.

12 *BG*, I, ii, pp. 392-93.

13 *EI*, VI, p. 161.

of several soldiers in fights in the war with Kannarasā (Kṛishṇa I), and mentioning Bāgeyur and Pinchanur as the scenes of two of the battles in the war.[14] The Gaṅga kingdom became thus subject to the Rāshṭrakūṭa overlordship. In the east, Kṛishṇa pursued his hostility to the Chālukyas against the Veṅgī branch of that line. The campaign against Veṅgī was entrusted to his son Govinda who was *yuvarāja* at the time, and the Alas plates[15] of A.D. 769-70 mention clearly that the ruler of Veṅgī came to meet Govinda and his army on their march against the Veṅgīmaṇḍala in the victorious camp at the confluence of the Kṛishṇā and the Musī rivers and offered his submission, placing his treasure, his army, his country and himself at the disposal of Govinda. The ruler of Veṅgī at the time was Vijayāditya I (A.D. 755-72). Veṅgī escaped this time by offering formal submission; there was no invasion of the Veṅgī kingdom and no battle. But this successful march of a Rāshṭrakūṭa prince to the frontiers of the kingdom was the shadow cast by the coming events on the fortunes of the Eastern Chālukyas.

The Rāshṭrakūṭa empire under Kṛishṇa I may thus be taken to have extended over the whole of the modern Maharashtra State, a good part of the Mysore country, practically the whole of the former Hyderabad State, with Veṅgī farther east acknowledging its supremacy, and a good part of Madhya Pradesh.

Quite in keeping with the high imperial position to which Kṛishṇa had raised his kingdom were the great works of art that signalized his reign, the celebrated temple of Kailāsa at Ellora being the most prominent among them. In the Wardha plates Kṛishṇa is said to have constructed many temples of Śiva which resembled the Kailāsa mountain (also Nos. XXIV, XXV, XXVI). The Baroda grant of A.D. 812-13 (No. XII) proclaims in unmistakable terms the glory of the temple at Ellora. To cite Prof. R. G. Bhandarkar's rendering of the passage:

> 'When the Gods moving in their aerial cars saw it they were struck with wonder and constantly thought much over the matter saying to themselves, this temple of Śiva is self-existent, for such beauty is not to be found in a work of art. Even the architect who constructed it was struck with wonder, saying, when his heart misgave him as regards making another similar attempt, "wonderful! I do not know how it was that I could construct it!" King Kṛishṇa with his own hands again decorated Śambhu (Śiva) placed in that temple by means of gold, rubies, and other precious jewels though he had already been decorated by the wonderful orna-

14 *MAR*. 1910, p. 23.
15 *EI*, VI, p. 208 and VII, p. 232.

ments of the stream of the Gaṅgā, and Moon and the deadly poison.'

The Kaḍaba plates[16] also contain a description of the temple to which it gives the name Kaṇṇeśvara, Kaṇṇa being of course the popular form of Krishṇa. This huge rock-cut temple is universally recognized as the high-water mark of all the excellences of the style of architecture and sculpture originally associated with the Pallavas; a verse in the Telegaon plates (No. V) says that the country over which Krishṇa ruled was adorned with all the excellences of Kāñchī, and Sṭen Konow has justly surmised that this is an indirect acknowledgement of the debt Krishṇa owed to the Pallava model, the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram.

The location of the Rāshṭrakūṭa capital in this period is not free from uncertainty. The fact that Krishṇa chose Ellora as the seat for the most magnificent monument of his reign may raise the presumption that the capital must have been located very near Ellora, if not in Ellora itself. According to the testimony of many later inscriptions Mānyakheṭa was built and made the capital of the empire by Amoghavarsha I. But a verse cited by Fleet from a Jaina work *Kathākośa*[17] states that Śubhatuṅga was living at the excellent city of Mānyakheṭa, and Śubhatuṅga happens to be a title of Krishṇa I. But as the same title was borne by Krishṇa II also, it seems better to take the verse from the *Kathākośa* to refer to that monarch as that would be in conformity with the testimony of the inscriptions cited above.

The death of Krishṇa must have occurred some time between A.D. 772, the date of his Bhāṇḍak plates (No. VI), and A.D. 775, that of the Pimpari plates[18] of his son Dhruva.

III. CIVIL WAR AND RECOVERY

Krishṇa was followed on the throne by his son Govinda II who, as we have seen, had been made *yuvarāja* some time before A.D. 769. In the Alas plates, issued even while he was *yuvarāja,* Govinda bears the titles *Prabhūtavarsha* (profuse rainer) and *Vikramāvaloka* (the man with the heroic look). These titles are repeated in other records of later times, and the Telegaon plates give him another title *Prabhutuṅga* (the eminent lord). He is also sometimes called simply *Vallabha* (Paithan, Pimpari, Bagumra). Govinda's name is omitted in some of the later grants of the line (No. XII, XIII). This was due probably to his being merely a collateral, the main line of succession continuing

16 *EI,* IV, No. 49.
17 *IA,* XII, p. 215.
18 *EI,* X, p. 88.

through his younger brother Dhruva. From the Dhulia plates (No. VII), A.D. 779, of his son Karka Suvarṇavarsha we see that Dhruva was ruling in the region of Nasik and Khāndesh as the viceroy of his elder brother Govinda II. One military achievement is attributed to Govinda II in a verse in the Daulatabad plates (A.D. 793),[19] which is a *double entendre*, comparing Govinda to Hari for his having exhibited the strength of his arm in snatching the glory of Pārijāta and in uprooting Govardhana. Pārijāta might have been the name of a local ruler, and if the uprooting of Govardhana may also be treated as part of the campaign against Pārijāta, the scene of the war must be sought in the Nasik region where Dhruva was ruling as viceroy. If this view is correct the campaign will form part of the struggle between the two brothers that fills a considerable place in the inscriptions and appears to have ended disastrously for Govinda.

For the next verse (v. 11) in the Daulatabad plates states that Nirupama, the younger brother of Govinda, seeing that Govinda had become conceited, was abandoned by princes, and had deserted the path of good policy, took upon himself the burden of royalty out of devotion to his ancestors and in order to preserve the sovereignty of the family. The evidence from other records supplements this information. Thus we learn (Nos. XXIV and XXV) that Govinda abandoned himself to a dissolute life, left the cares of sovereignty entirely to his younger brother Nirupama, and thereby lost his hold on the kingdom. But obviously Govinda did not yield without a struggle, and made an attempt to defend himself against his brother's efforts to depose him. He summoned to his aid the Pallava ruler of Kāñchī, the Gaṅga king, the king of Veṅgī, and the ruler of Mālava,[20] even though they were traditional foes of the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom. This alliance of Govinda with hostile monarchs against his own brother was apparently the lapse from good policy which Dhruva resented and which threatened in his view to disrupt the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire. Dhruva claims[21] that he made conciliatory overtures to Vallabha, but as he was not inclined to make peace, he speedily defeated him in a battle, and assumed the sovereignty himself. How exactly Govinda ended his life, on the battle-field or in prison, is not clear from the sources.

Dhruva's victory, however, was not so easily or quickly achieved as his records lead one to suppose. An inscription of the reign of Kṛishṇa III contains a pointed statement that the waters of the Ganges bore the appearance of the Yamunā owing to the victory of Govinda

19 *EI*, IX, p. 194, v. 10.
20 Paithan pl., *EI*, III, p. 104.
21 *Ibid.*

over Indra, doubtless Indrāyudha of Kanauj.[21a] As Vatsarāja befriended Govinda, his rival Dhruva must naturally have sought the help of Indrāyudha and got him to attack Vatsarāja of Malwa in the rear; this must have given cause to Govinda for the attack on Kanauj. Dhruva's rebellion commenced, apparently, about 775, the date of the Pimpari plates in which he bears imperial titles; but Dhruva did not succeed at once, and had to eat the humble pie for a time as a result of Govinda's victories at Govardhana and Kanauj; so even as late as 779 (Dhulia plates) he had to acknowledge Govinda as his suzerain.

The final success of Dhruva against his brother Govinda II and his accession to the throne must have occurred about 780 or soon after. Dhruva was also called Dhora, a Prākṛit form of the same name, and he had the titles *Nirupama* (unequalled), *Kali-vallabha* (fond of war), *Dhārāvarsha*[22] (heavy rainer) and *Śrīvallabha*. One of his first tasks after securing the throne was to proceed against the enemies who had assisted Govinda II in the late civil war. The Paithan plates state summarily that by defeating the kings of the east, north, and south, and capturing vast quantities of jewels and gold from them, together with the *Pālidhvaja* and other insignia of royalty, he attained supreme sovereignty, and became a veritable Indra on earth. For details we must turn to other records. They state (Nos. VIII, IX, X) that he caught and imprisoned the Gaṅga, levied a tribute of elephants from the Pallava who made his submission, drove into the desert Vatsarāja, proud of his victory against Gauḍa, and lastly deprived the Gauḍa ruler himself not only of his two white umbrellas but of his fame which had reached far in all directions. He is said to have won victories also against the king of Kosala (No. XIII). He also waged war against the ruler of Veṅgī and punished him severely for the support he had given to Govinda II.

The Gaṅga ruler who went to the aid of Govinda II and paid for it by being caught and thrown into prison by Dhruva was doubtless Śivamāra II. An inscription from Nanjangud[23] says that during

21a *SII*, IX (1), No. 68, v. 6, cited by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya in his paper: 'An unknown incident in the History of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Malkhed', *PIHC*, IX (1945), pp. 85-90. The victory of Govinda is mentioned in a pun not easily translated. It reads:

Yat senayā hīndra-madā-vamardanād Gaṅgāpayo
Yāmunavad vibhāti.

The two meanings are (1) by Govinda's army Indra's pride was crushed—*senayā hi Indra-madavamardanāt;* (2) the pride of the great serpent was crushed by the army: *senayā ahīndra-madāvamardanāt*, a reference to Śrī Krishna's fight with the Serpent Kāliya which took place in the Yamunā.

22 *EC*, IV, Hg. 93.

23 *EC*, XII, Suppl. Nj., 269.

Śivamāra's absence from the kingdom it was looked after by his younger brother Vijayāditya who, however, like Bharata, treated the kingdom as a trust. The Rāshṭrakūṭa conqueror appointed his son Kaṁbha as viceroy over Gaṅgavāḍi ninety-six thousand.[24] The Pallava monarch who had likewise to make his submission and yield a tribute of war elephants to Dhruva must have been Nandi-varman II. The relations between Dhruva and Veṅgī find elucidation in a verse from *Pampabhārata* read along with the inscriptions of the Chālukyas of Vemulavāḍa.[25] Dhruva was aided in the war against Veṅgī by Arikesarī I, the founder of the line of Chālukyas that ruled at Vemulavāḍa as the loyal feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas practically throughout the period of their supermacy. Arikesarī played a decisive part in the war against Veṅgī which included Trikaliṅga within the sphere of its influence. He is said to have taken all Veṅgī by force and ruled it. Allowing for exaggeration, we may assume that as a result of Arikesarī's campaign, parts of Telingana definitely changed hands, being annexed to the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire and held as a fief by Arikesarī and his successors from this period. The ruler of Veṅgī at the time was Vishṇuvardhana IV who made his peace with Dhruva by offering him the hand of his daughter Śīlamahādevī who became the chief queen of Dhruva.[26]

In northern India there was beginning a struggle for supremacy between the Gurjara-Pratīhāra rulers and the Pālas of Bengal. The struggle had commenced, and Vatsarāja, the Gurjara ruler, had won a success against Dharmapāla of Bengal. But this did not deter Dhruva from punishing the Gurjara ruler for his having taken the side of Govinda II in the late war; he was forced to seek refuge for a time in the deserts of Rajasthan. Dhruva did not stop there, but proceeded further north into the Ganga-Yamuna Doab where he met Dharmapāla and inflicted a defeat on him, and perhaps reinstated Indrāyudha for a time. Forced to flee from that country Dharmapāla abandoned into the hands of Dhruva the parasols and other insignia of his sovereignty (No. XIX). In the Baroda plates (No. XII) Dhruva is said to have captured the images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā from his enemies and thereby attained the supreme position of sovereignty. These are doubtless exaggerated statements, for there is no evidence that Dhruva's expedition to the north resulted in any considerable extension of the territory of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire beyond the Vindhvas. But as a demonstration of the force of the new power that had come up in the Deccan the raid must have been very effective.

24 *EC*, II, No. 35.
25 *JMU*, XV, p. 112.
26 *EI*, XXII, p. 107.

Among the inscriptions of Dhruva's reign we may note two undated records, one from Naregal,[27] mentioning that a certain Mārakka Arasa was ruling Banavāsi 12,000 under Dhora, the other from Paṭṭaḍakal[28] recording gifts by Badipoddi, a dancing girl of the temple of Lokamahādevī, the modern Virūpāksha temple, to that very temple.

Dhruva had many sons; at least four of them are known, Kaṁbha, the viceroy of Gaṅgavāḍi, who was the eldest son, and Karka-Suvarṇavarsha, who was ruling in Khāndesh as viceroy even in the reign of his uncle Govinda II (No. VII), Govinda, and Indra. Towards the close of his reign Dhruva was struck by the superior ability of Govinda and wanted to abdicate the throne in his favour (No. IX). But Govinda resisted the proposal accepting only the position of *yuvarāja* with its symbol the *kaṇṭhikā* (necklace) out of deference to his father's command. While this action of Govinda is commended in one of his inscriptions (No. IX), other records (Nos. XIV, XV, also Paithan) definitely state that Govinda obtained full sovereignty over the kingdom from his father at a formal coronation. Probably Dhruva made Govinda emperor in his own lifetime; if that was so, his aim of avoiding trouble about succession was not realised.

Dhruva's death must have occurred some time in 793-94, between the dates of the Daulatabad plates of Śaṅkaragaṇa and the Paithan plates of Govinda III.

IV. APOGEE

Govinda III had the titles of *Jagattuṅga* (prominent in the world), *Prabhūtavarsha* (the abundant rainer), *Śrīvallabha* (the favourite of Fortune), *Janavallabha* (favourite of the people), *Kīrti-Nārāyaṇa* (the very Nārāyaṇa in respect of fame), and *Tribhuvanadhavala* (pure in the three worlds, No. XIX). Dhruva's choice of Govinda for the succession appears to have caused widespread discontent among Govinda's brothers and the feudatories and officials of the empire. This discontent did not find open expression during the lifetime of Dhruva, but burst into a flame very soon after his death. Govinda was not unaware of the situation, and did his best to forestall his enemies among whom his elder brother Kaṁbha was the chief. Immediately after his coronation Govinda sought to enlist the active support of his *sāmantas*, confirming them all in their respective places and addressing kind words to them in open council saying that in his mind they took the place of his father. He also released the Gaṅga ruler Śivamāra imprisoned by his father, evidently hoping for support from him in the

27 *SI*, *VI*, p. 163.
28 *IA*, XI, p. 125.

ensuing struggle (No. XIX). But kaṁbha had also been preparing actively and had gone too far to recede. Śivamāra, when he returned to his country, also threw in his lot with Kaṁbha who found several other allies to support him, for Govinda is said to have inflicted a crushing defeat on a confederacy of twelve rulers although he was single-handed, his actions being compared by the poet to that of Saṁvartaka, fire outshining the lustre of twelve suns at the destruction of the universe. The identity of these other confederates is by no means clear, though, as Fleet suggested, Kaṭṭiyara, a Chāḷukya prince who is mentioned in the Diḍgūr inscription,[29] might have been among them. Govinda is said to have used his victory with moderation and to have once more harboured the quondam rebels under his wings as the ocean does the submarine fire (No. XIX). Indra, the brother of Govinda, who was loyal to him throughout the struggle, is said to have advocated moderation to the vanquished foes of Govinda who was inclined to treat them harshly (No. XII). Kaṁbha himself was reinstated as viceroy over Gaṅgavāḍi as is clear from his Maṇṇe plates issued in A.D. 802 (No. VIII). The Gaṅga ruler Śivamāra, however, who had abused the favour shown to him, was once more captured and put in prison (Nos. IX, XIX).

After quelling the rebellions in the south, Govinda carried his arms into Northern India. There, according to the Rādhanpur plates (No. IX), the Gurjara fled somewhere out of fear, and the ruler of Mālava readily offered submission to Govinda. The Sañjan plates (No. XIX) state that Govinda defeated in battle Nāgabhaṭa and Chandragupta, and being only eager for fame, he reinstated them as well as other rulers in their respective kingdoms. The caverns of the Himālayas resounded to the noises made by his horses, elephants and musical instruments, and the kings Dharma and Chakrāyudha offered their submission to him who thus became Kīrti-Nārāyaṇa. Returning from there Govinda again followed the bank of the Narmadā, acquiring the Mālava country along with the Kosala, Kaliṅga, Veṅgī, Ḍāhala and the Oḍraka—all of which he began to rule by the agency of his own servants.

Here then is the picture of an extensive and successful campaign in Central and Northern India. These campaigns must have taken place before 803-4, the date of Govinda's encampment[30] on the

29 *EI*, VI, p. 253. The position of Mārasalba of the undated Guḍigeṛe inscription seems to be less certain now (*Ibid*, p. 257).

30 *Walter Elliot* plate. *IA*, XI, p. 126. Ins. No. X omits the reference to the campaign against Gurjara (verse 15 of ins. No. IX) and another verse 19 on the Veṅgī ruler acting as the humble servant of Govinda. It has been inferred from this that the northern campaign took place between A.D. 806 and 808. But one may not be

Tuṅgabhadrā after the northern campaigns. The Gurjara opponent of Govinda was doubtless Nāgabhaṭa II, the son of Vatsarāja. The facts cited above from the Rāshṭrakūṭa grants find a good commentary in a very significant statement in the Gwalior *praśasti* of Bhoja,[31] saying that the kings of Andhra, Sindhu, Vidarbha and Kaliṅga fell like moths into the youthful fire of Nāgabhaṭa's energy. It has been rightly pointed out:[32]

> 'The force of this simile is preserved if we suppose that the kings of these four countries were not conquered by Nāgabhaṭa but joined him of their own accord in the first instance, although, ultimately they lost their power thereby. The position of these four countries confirms this view. Joined to Mālava and Rājputāna, which were the home territory of the Gurjaras, the four countries form a central belt right across the country bounded on the north by the empire of the Pālas, and on the south by that of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. It appears quite likely, therefore, that they formed a confederacy against the two great powers that pressed them from the two sides.'

Indra, the loyal brother of Govinda, played a prominent part in the war against the Gurjara ruler, for in the Baroda plates of Karka II, A.D. 812-3 (No. XII), Indra is said single-handed to have put the lord of the Gurjaras to flight. Whether Indra had become viceroy of Lāṭa before he undertook the campaign against the Gurjara or after, cannot be determined, nor can the identity of the ruler of Mālava who made his submission to the victor be decided.

After inflicting a decisive defeat on Nāgabhaṭa II and on his ally Chandragupta, whose identity is uncertain, the Rāshṭrakūṭa armies pressed further north into the Ganga-Yamuna Doab and up to the Himālayas. The celebrated Pāla ruler Dharmapāla and his protégé Chakrāyudha, whom he had installed on the throne of Kanauj, thought it prudent to make their submission to the invader, instead of offering him battle and risking defeat; for after all he had done them signal service by crushing the power of their chief enemy Nāgabhaṭa when it was at its height, and he might withdraw into the Deccan when the campaign was over leaving the States of North India to their own devices. These calculations proved to be right in the main.

quite sure of this. The Maṇṇe plates (No. VIII) give all the Rādhanpur verses. In *D. R. Bhandarkar Volume*, pp. 153 ff, Dr. Altekar postulates two northern and two southern expeditions of Govinda for which there seems to be no warrant in the records themselves. See *EI*, XXIII, pp. 214-17 and 293-97 for a discussion between Mirashi and Altekar, where, I think, Mirashi has the best of the argument on the chronology of the campaigns, and the date of the Maṇṇe plates.

31 *EI*, XVIII, p. 108, v. 8.

32 By R. C. Majumdar, *ibid.*, p. 104.

It seems probable that the Mālava country became part of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire, being annexed to the viceroyalty of Lāṭa. In the Baroda plates of Karka (No. XII) there occurs the following significant statement: 'the ruler of Mālava had been subjugated by Karka who then caused his own arm to become the excellent door-bar for the protection of that ruler in the direction of the lord of the Gurjaras who had become insolent by his victory over Gauḍa and Vaṅga.' The Gurjara ruler against whom Mālava was protected by Karka was also Nāgabhaṭa II. He seems to have renewed his contest with Dharmapāla after the withdrawal of the Rāshṭrakūṭa army and gained successes in fights against him and his confederates. But in the direction of the Rāshṭrakūṭa power, his strength availed him little, and the northern viceroyalty of Lāṭa was holding successfully the extended frontier of the southern empire for some years.

No details are forthcoming regarding the campaigns against Kaliṅga, Ḍāhala and Oḍraka; Veṅgī we shall consider presently.

After his return from the Himalayan region, Govinda fixed his camp at the foot of the Vindhya mountains on the banks of the Narmadā. Hearing through his spies of the approach of the victorious monarch, king Mārāśarva who was ruling in the Broach region from his capital Śrībhavana, modern Sarbhon, offered his submission to Govinda, welcomed him into his capital, and laid at his feet the choicest treasures accumulated by his ancestors. Govinda spent the whole of the ensuing rainy season at Śrībhavana and there was born to him a son *Mahārāja* Śarva, the future Amoghavarsha,[33] and astrologers in Govinda's camp predicted a bright future for the newly born prince.

When he left Śrībhavana, Govinda marched with his army on an expedition to the south to destroy the haughtiness of the Draviḍa kings, as the Sañjan plates (No. XIX) put it (v. 30). According to that record Govinda 'terrified the Kerala, Pāṇḍya and the Chola kings and caused the Pallava to wither ... the Gaṅgas, who became dissatisfied through baseness, were bound down with fetters and met with death', and the lord of Veṅgī worked as an unpaid servant in the camp of Govinda. We also learn that the king of Laṅkā and his minister, who

33 Inscription No. IX, vv. 17-18, and XIX, vv. 25-28. Altekar (*History of the Rāshṭrakūṭas*, p. 68) says that Govinda spent the rainy season of A.D. 808 (date of No. IX) at Sarbhon and that Amoghavarsha was born in that year. These seems to be no support for this statement. The inscriptions are clear that Govinda's campaign against Pallava and his encampment on the bank of the Tuṅgabhadrā came after his stay at Śrībhavana, and the Walter Elliot plates issued in the camp on the Tuṅgabhadrā are dated Ś. 726, A D. 803-4. So the camp at Śrībhavana and the birth of Amoghavarsha must be placed some time before this date. See also *EI*, XXIII, p. 217.

had been negligent of their own interests, were captured and brought over as prisoners to Helāpura and that two statues of the lord of Laṅkā, which were received at Kāñchī, were thence carried over to Mānyakheṭa where they were installed like pillars of victory in front of a Śiva temple (No. XIX, v. 34).

We get no details from any other source regarding the action taken by Govinda against Gaṅgas, Kerala, Pāṇḍyas, Chola and Laṅkā. We may note in passing that the reference to two statues of the lord of Laṅkā adorning the portals of a Śiva temple in the Rāshṭrakūṭa capital is very interesting. It seems to imply that one way of proclaiming the subordination of feudatory rulers was to install their portrait images as *dvārapālakas* in temples in the capital city of a suzerain.

The inscription of A.D. 803-4 states distinctly that Govinda won a victory against Dantiga, the ruler of Kāñchī, and levied tribute from him before he went and established his camp in the Rāmeśvara *tīrtha* on the Tuṅgabhadrā. As we have seen, it was during his stay at Kāñchī that Govinda received the statues of the ruler of Laṅkā. Govinda's southern campaign appears to have been no more than a *digvijaya*, the conventional assertion of superior power by a triumphant march across the territory of the neighbouring rulers demanding tokens of their submission.

Of the ruler of Veṅgī the inscriptions of Govinda III say that he was ever ready to carry out with alacrity the behests of his suzerain. The statement that he helped to build the surrounding wall of his camp has sometimes been understood to refer to the fortification of Mānyakheṭa. The contemporaries of Govinda III at Veṅgī were Vishṇu-vardhana IV and Vijayāditya II. Vijayāditya II resented the hold of the Rāshṭrakūṭas over Veṅgī, while on their side they treated him as a rebel and found a convenient tool in his half-brother Bhīma Saluki whom they set up as his rival. Vijayāditya was a great fighter and had the title *narendra-mṛigarāja* (lion among kings). But so long as Govinda III was alive and commanded the aid of his vassals like the Western Gaṅgas and the Chālukyas of Vemulavāḍa, things went badly for Vijayāditya, and Bhīma Saluki found it possible to rule with some pretence to power in parts of the Veṅgī kingdom. A verse in the inscriptions of Amoghavarsha I and Kṛishṇa II sums up the achievements of Govinda saying: 'Having fettered the people of Kerala, Mālava and Gauḍa together with Gurjaras dwelling in the hill fort of Chitrakūṭa and then the lords of Kāñchī, he became *Kīrtinārāyaṇa*' (Nos. XVII, XVIII).

Among the feudatories of Govinda mentioned in the inscriptions of the reign we may mention Yerayamma and Madanāga Arasa, both

ruling Banavāsi;[34] and a Nolamba Pallava Chāruponnera ruling in Nolambavāḍi.[35] Govinda's chief queen (*Mahādevī*) was Gāmuṇḍabbegal. The king performed a *gosahasra-dāna* at Belvole[36] (Gadag district). The last known date for Govinda is that of the Torkhede plates, Ś. 735, A.D. 812-3 (No. XI). He must be taken to have died soon after, say A.D. 814.

Govinda III was beyond doubt one of the greatest of the Rāshṭrakūṭa monarchs. He spread the fame of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire literally from the Himālayas to Cape Comorin. He more than justified his father's choice of him as most fitted to rule the empire, and showed his great capacity both in diplomacy and on the battlefield. Well might his court-poet claim for him the distinction that after his birth the Rāshṭrakūṭas became as unassailable as the Yādavas after the birth of Śrī Kṛishṇa.

Govinda III was followed on the throne by his only son Mahārāja Śarva, better known as Amoghavarsha I (fruitful rainer). His Sirur inscription (No. XVIII) couples his fifty-second regnal year with A.D. 866; thus the date of his accession was A.D. 814. He had the titles *Nṛipatuṅga* (exalted among kings), *Atiśayadhavala* (wonderfully white in conduct), *Mahārāja-shaṇḍa* (best of the great kings), and *Vīra-Nārāyaṇa* (the heroic Nārāyaṇa). Amoghavarsha must have been a lad of about fifteen years when he was called to the throne, and troubles seem to have fallen thick upon the boy-king. In four verses his Sañjan plates (No. XIX, vv. 38-41) give a turgid account of the revolts of feudatories and officials and relations (*sāmantas, sachivas, bāndhavas*) and the consequent anarchy which threatened to disrupt the empire early in his reign. They state also that Amoghavarsha owed his reinstatement in power to Ārya Pātālamalla. Now Pātālamalla appears to have been a title[37] of Karka I of the Lāṭa family of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the son of Indrarāja, the loyal younger brother of Govinda III and founder of that branch. Karka is said to have installed Amoghavarsha on his throne after conquering with his sword the arrogant and insolent customs officials (*śaulkikas*) and district officers (*rāshṭrakūṭas*) who had taken hold of what territories they could, and formed a close alliance among themselves.[38]

Great must have been the danger through which Amoghavarsha

34 *EC*, VIII, sb. 1 and 9.

35 *EC*, XI, Cl. 33-34.

36 BK, 148 of 1926-27.

37 *BG*, I, pt. i, p. 124.

38 Verse 39 of ins. No. XIV is the same as verse 10 of No. XVI. The verse occurs in other records also. I accept the reading of the Surat plate (No. XIV) as the most authoritative, and interpret the verse somewhat differently from my predecessors.

passed. The Sañjan plates (No. XIX) employ a significant simile and state that when the sun set, the moon and the stars began to shine out in the sky; Amoghavarsha was evidently dethroned for a time and the rebels had it all their own way. Prominent among them must have been Vijayāditya II of Veṅgī, and perhaps also the Gaṅga ruler in the south. It is not clear if the *rāshṭrakūṭas* whom Karka had to subdue before restoring Amoghavarsha to the throne were members of collateral branches of the royal family or the several officials of the empire bearing that designation, more likely the latter. Of Vijayāditya II of Veṅgī the records of his successors state that he fought 108 battles against the Gaṅgas and Raṭṭas incessantly night and day for 12 years with sword in hand, and that he erected the same number of Śiva temples called Narendreśvaras after his title Narendramṛigarāja. This sounds much like a legend, and the number 108 is conventional; but some of these temples are mentioned in later Eastern Chālukya inscriptions. The 12 years might well have been the duration of the rival rule of Bhīma Saluki. In any case, there can be little doubt that for a time Vijayāditya gained the upper hand, deposed Bhīma Saluki, and after making himself master of the whole of the Veṅgī kingdom overran considerable parts of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire.[39]

The combined exertions of Amoghavarsha and his cousin Karka proved equal to the occasion. Amoghavarsha is said to have surrounded and burnt the number of disaffected kings who were like thorns to the kingdom.[40] He was once more firmly seated on his throne by A.D. 821, the date of the Surat plates of Karka (No. XIV). As Karka's part in the suppression of anarchy and the restoration of Amoghavarsha does not find a place in his Nausari plates (No. XIII) of A.D. 816 we may assume that the peak of the rebellion and its suppression fell between the years A.D. 816 and 821.

But at no time during his long reign of 64 years did the empire of Amoghavarsha really enjoy peace in all its parts. Rebellions of feudatories and wars waged against them to bring them back to obedience occurred repeatedly. The chronology of these wars is far from certain as the data regarding some of them at least come to us piecemeal from inscriptions dated several years after the close of Amoghavarsha's reign. One thing is certain, that the war with the Eastern Chālukyas began again somewhere about A.D. 850. Peace was maintained in that quarter during the rest of the reign of Vijayāditya II which lasted till A.D. 847, as also during the very short reign of less than two years of his son and successor Kali Vishṇu-vardhana V.

39 *ARE*, 1912, II, 62; 1918, II, 4; *SII*, I, No. 39.

40 Kapadvanj plates, *EI*, I, p. 85, v. 9.

The next ruler, the son of Vishṇuvardhana V, was Guṇaga Vijayāditya, one of the ablest sovereigns of the Eastern Chālukya line. Although connected with the Rāshṭrakūṭas through his mother Śīlamahādevī, perhaps daughter of Indra, the founder of the Lāṭa line, Guṇaga Vijayāditya made up his mind to free the Veṅgī kingdom from the yoke of Amoghavarsha. He seems to have begun his campaign by an attack upon Stambhapurī, modern Kambham (Cumbum) in the Kurnool (Karnūl) district, which was then included in the Rāshṭrakūṭa dominions. Amoghavarsha naturally retaliated and dispatched an army to reduce Guṇaga Vijayāditya to submission. A decisive engagement took place at Viṅgāvalli, which must be sought near Kambham. In this sanguinary battle, Amoghavarsha in his anger is said to have pleased the God of Death by offering him rare sweets in the form of the Chālukyan forces (Nos. XXII, XXIII). Elsewhere Amoghavarsha is said to have raised up the prosperity of the Raṭṭa kingdom sunk in the ocean of the Chālukyas and to have uprooted and fired the inimical Chālukyas as if they were pulses (peas) (No. XXI). It may be doubted, however, if this last reference is to the campaigns against Guṇaga Vijayāditya or the earlier war against his grandfather Vijayāditya II. However that may be, Viṅgāvalli was a decisive battle, and Guṇaga Vijayāditya had to submit to Amoghavarsha and acknowledge him as his suzerain.

About the same time Amoghavarsha had to deal with a formidable rebellion in the Gaṅga country, and very soon after with another rebellion in the northern part of the empire. The facts of the Gaṅga rebellion are set forth in considerable detail in the Konnūr inscription of A.D. 860.[41] This inscription records the achievements of a favourite general of Amoghavarsha called Baṅkeśa Sellaketana as narrated by the king himself. By the king's favour Baṅkeśa had been set to rule over a territory comprising 30,000 villages, Banavāsi being the seat of his rule. At the king's desire Baṅkeśa strove hard to suppress the adversaries of the monarch and in particular to stamp out rebellion in Gaṅgavāḍi. On that occasion although many fellow-feudatories had deserted and joined the rebellion, Baṅkeśa fought for his master aided solely by the daring which sprang from his anger. He destroyed the enemy Nītimārga, brought Raṇavikrama to the path of loyalty, and thus made the anger in his master's heart not barren.[42] He

41 *EI*, VI, pp. 25 ff. This inscription is now seen to be a thoroughly genuine document. Kielhorn had doubted its authenticity on insufficient grounds. See *EI*, XVIII, pp. 236-37.

42 Kielhorn missed the play in the verse on the titles *Nītimārga* and *Raṇavikrama* of the Gaṅga ruler Yerraya who headed the rebellion: *dhvastaripu-nītimārgo raṇa-*

easily captured the impregnable fortress of Kedāla, defeated Raṇavikrama, the ruler of Talavānapura, crossed the river Kāvérī, and laid waste much of the enemy country.

It is clear that in this war the chief enemy of the Rāshṭrakūṭa power was the Gaṅga ruler Yeṛṛaya, also known as Nītimārga and Raṇavikrama, whose reign extended from about A.D. 837 to 870. Many other feudatories of the empire had also joined the Gaṅga ruler and Baṅkeśa had a difficult task before him. He was proving himself equal to it, and would have completed it had not Amoghavarsha recalled him hastily to assist him in overcoming troubles nearer home. The Konnūr inscription continues that when through internal dissensions a disturbânce had arisen near the emperor, at his mere word that Baṅkeśa should return, he went and joined him in a few days. He vowed that he would subdue the enemies and 'make his master drink milk' within three months. The rebellion was serious and somehow the crown prince Kṛishṇa II was involved in it. But he was sent away from the rebel camp before Baṅkeśa forced a battle on the other confederates, either slaying or taking prisoner most of them, and thus fulfilled his promise to his master.

We do not get the details of this rebellion nearer home from any other source. It seems probable that the Lāṭa branch was also involved in the revolt besides the crown prince Kṛishṇa II. The Bagumra[43] plates of A.D. 867 say of Dhruva, the son and successor of Karkarāja, that he fell in battle with the Vallabha forces. It would thus seem that the friendly relations that prevailed between Amoghavarsha and the Lāṭa branch under Karka at the beginning of the reign underwent a change under his son Dhruva I. In his Baroda plates (No. XVI) of A.D. 835 there is nothing to indicate hostility between Amoghavarsha and his Lāṭa feudatory, and the war, which began some time after that date and led to the death of Dhruva I on the field, continued under his son Akālavarsha who claims to have recovered his ancestral kingdom after freeing it from the occupation of the Vallabha forces.[44] The war continued also under his son Dhruva II who claims that he had to fight on two fronts against the Gurjaras on the north and the Vallabha in the south.[45] Dhruva was assisted in these wars by his younger brother Govindarāja,[46] though another younger brother and some other kinsmen had turned hostile

vikramaṁ ekabuddhim abhinīya. With less excuse all others who have followed him have failed to notice it also.

43 *IA*, XXII, pp. 183-84, v. 32.

44 *IA*, XII, p. 184, v. 34.

45 *Ibid.*, vv. 37-42.

46 *Ibid.*, vv. 58-59.

to him. The Gurjara enemy against whom Dhruva fought was Mihira Bhoja whose name appears in the inscription.[47] Dhruva II would appear ultimately to have made his peace with Amoghavarsha some time about A.D. 860 in order the better to be able to meet the domestic crisis and the invasion of the Gurjara ruler Mihira Bhoja. We find him securely seated on his throne after victories in A.D. 867.

To return to Amoghavarsha's relations with Gaṅgas and Veṅgī. By the time Baṅkeśa was ordered to go to the emperor's side to encounter the rebels in the north, the battle of Vīṅgāvalli had been fought, and Guṇaga Vijayāditya had made his submission and acknowledged the supremacy of Amoghavarsha. He retained the dependent status to the end of Amoghavarsha's reign, and served him during the period as a loyal feudatory against those who made trouble against their suzerain; and when Baṅkeśa went away from the Gaṅga country, Vijayāditya took his place with his army. The Gaṅga king Nītimārga had found an ally in the Nolamba ruler, called Maṅgi,[48] whose territory lay on the route of Vijayāditya to Gaṅgavāḍi. A fierce engagement took place between the Eastern Chālukya troops and those of the Nolamba ruler, when Vijayāditya marched into Nolambavādi. The Chālukyas gained a complete victory, thanks to the advice of Vinayaḍi Śarman, the military adviser of Vijayāditya, who directed the course of the battle. Maṅgi was slain, and the road to Gaṅgavāḍi lay open for Vijayāditya. The Gaṅga army was beaten in its turn and compelled to take refuge on the lofty summit of the Gaṅgakūṭa, that is, the Śivagaṅga hill in the Nelamaṅgala *taluk* of the present Bangalore district in Mysore .[49] The back of the Gaṅga rebellion was broken, and Nītimārga Permānaḍi was obliged to make peace with Amoghavarsha. The peace seems to have been sealed by a dynastic alliance, Nītimārga's son Būtuga I marrying Abbalabbe, the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa emperor.[50]

The Sirur inscription of A.D. 856 (No. XVIII) states that the rulers of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Magadha, Mālava and Veṅgī worshipped Amoghavarsha. The reference to Veṅgī and Mālava is intelligible. But it is not easy to explain the mention of Vaṅga, Aṅga and Magadha. In fact Amoghavarsha was too fully occupied with wars and rebellions nearer home for him to think of meddling in the politics of Northern Indian states. Even the Gurjara Pratīhāra ruler Mihira Bhoja was, as we have seen, left by him to be dealt with by his cousins ruling

47 *Ibid.*, v. 41.

48 *EI*, V, p. 125.

49 *EI*, IX, p. 51, v. 3.

50 Sudi plates; also *EC*, XII, Nanjangud 269, giving the name of the princess as Chandrobalabbe.

in the Lāṭa country. The only direct contact with Northern India in the reign was that arising from the crown prince Krishṇa II marrying a Chedi princess, daughter of Kokkala I (No. XXVIII).

Moreover by temperament Amoghavarsha liked the pursuit of religion and literature much better than that of war. A verse in the Sañjan plates (No. XIX, v. 48) states that out of a disregard for worldly effects, Amoghavarsha had abdicated his throne more than once before the date of those plates (A.D. 871). He is counted by the Jainas among the most prominent followers of their faith, and a small Jaina catechism entited *Praśnottara Ratnamālikā* contains a verse stating that it was composed by king Amoghavarsha after he had given up the kingdom in consequence of the growth of the ascetic spirit (*viveka*) in him.[51] It seems probable that Amogavarsha occasionally took leave of his royal duties to spend his time in the company of Jaina monks and other forms of religions meditation. It is probable that on such occasions the affairs of State were looked after by his only son, who afterwards succeeded him as Krishṇa II.

It may be doubted, however, if Amoghavarsha became a Jaina in the full sense of the term and abandoned the Brahmanical religion. A verse in the Sañjan plates (No. XIX, v. 47) refers to the sacrifice of his finger by the king to Mahālakshmī in order to free the world from an impending calamity, and compares this act to the similar acts of the son of Jīmūtaketu, of Śibi and Dadhīchi, a comparison which is repeated in stronger terms in the *Karṇāṭaka Śabdānuśāsana* of Bhaṭṭakalaṅka.[52] The emperor also performed at *tulāpurushadāna* on the occasion of a solar eclipse in A.D. 862.[53]

Amoghavarsha was himself an author. He was also a patron of authors. The *Kavirājamārga,* the earliest work on poetics in the Kannaḍa language, was either written or inspired by him. It now passes as the work of Nṛipatuṅga, a title of Amoghavarsha. Jinasena, the author of *Ādipurāṇa,* was among the Jaina preceptors of Amoghavarsha; this becomes clear from a verse in the *Ādipurāṇa* itself, and another at the end of *Pārśvābhyudaya* of the same writer giving expression to a wish that Amoghavarsha may reign for a long time.[54] Amoghavarsha is celebrated in the inscriptions as the maker of Mānyakheṭa. He is said to have built the city so as to excel the city of Indra and thus curb the pride of the gods (Nos. XXIV, XXV, XXVI). Elsewhere he is said to have built an excellent palace full of fine workmanship including an extensive apartment for royal women and a beautiful

51 *IA*, XII. p. 218; XIX, pp. 378 ff; *BG*, I, pt. ii. pp. 200-1 and 203.
52 *IA*, 1904, p. 197.
53 *SII*, XI (i), No. 9.
54 *BG*, I, pt. II, p. 200.

tank, all in the city of Mānyakheṭa (XXVIII). It is clear that Amoghavarsha must have been a great builder also.

A daughter of Amoghavarsha, Śaṅkhā by name, became the chief queen of the Pallava ruler Nandi-varman III (*c.* 830-54) of Kāñchī, and bore him a son called Nṛipatuṅga, after his maternal grandfather (Bāhūr plates). From inscriptions we get the names of the following important officials and feudatories in addition to those already named in the course of our narrative of the reign. A certain Kuppeya of the Yādavavaṁśa is found ruling Purigere between A.D. 864 and 867;[55] Devanayya in Belvole in the years A.D. 866-72;[56] lastly, the Śilāhāra ruler Phullaśakti and his son Kapardin II ruling northern Koṅkan from their capital at Purī, modern Elephanta. Three inscriptions[57] are left by these monarchs at Kaṇheri. All of them are clearly dated in the reign of Amoghavarsha, and one bears the date Ś. 799, A.D. 877-8, the last recorded date so far known for Amoghavarsha.

V. CRISIS

The death of Amoghavarsha was followed by the definitive accession of his son Kṛishṇa II to the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne, and it must have occurred about A.D. 880. Kṛishṇa had the titles *Akālavarsha* and *Śubhatuṅga,* and his name occurs in the inscriptions sometimes in the Prākṛit from *Kannara.* As has already been noted, he was the son-in-law of Kokkala I, the Chedi ruler. The name of the Chedi queen of Kṛishṇa does not occur anywhere in the inscriptions.

In a verse which is repeated in a number of inscriptions (Nos. XXI, XXIV, XXV, XXVI) Kṛishṇa is represented as having frightened the Gurjara, humbled the pride of the Lāṭa, taught humility to the Gauḍas, and deprived the people on the sea-coast (*sāmudra*) of their repose, besides being worshipped by the Andhra, Kaliṅga and Magadha rulers standing at his gates. Though this looks like conventional praise which may not be accepted as history, parts of the account receive confirmation from other sources. That Kṛishṇa fought a war with the Gurjara ruler Bhoja I is clear from a fragmentary Pratihāra inscription[58] which mentions Bhoja's attack on a king called Kṛishṇa Rāja, and refers to the Narmadā in this connection. Again the Nausari plates of A.D. 914 (No. XXI) state that at the date of that charter old men described the thundering fights of Kṛishṇa with the Gurjara. Lastly, the Bagumra plates of Kṛishṇa of the Lāṭa branch, dated A.D. 888 (No. XX), state

55 *SII*, XI (1), Nos. 11, 12; *EI*, VII, pp. 198-202.
56 *IA*, XII, p. 219; *SII*, XI (1), Nos. 13, 14, 15.
57 *IA*, XIII, p. 133.
58 *EI*, XIX, pp. 174-77.

that that prince spread his fame widely by conquering at Ujjayinī, with his sword, before the very eyes of king Vallabha, the enemy of that monarch. We have seen that after a long period of hostility, peace had been established between the imperial line and that of Lāṭa in the reign of Amoghavarsha. Lāṭa had generally acted in the defence of the empire, particularly for the protection of Mālava. The ambitious Gurjara ruler Bhoja must have sought to aggrandize himself soon after the accession of Kṛishṇa, and invaded Mālava and Lāṭa. Kṛishṇa was lucky in having the co-operation of his Lāṭa feudatory and was successful in repelling the invader. But these friendly relations between the emperor and his Lāṭa feudatory must have come to an end soon after, for we find that by the date of the Kapadvanj grant, A.D. 910, Lāṭa had come to be ruled directly by Kṛishṇa himself, assisted by a new feudatory house, the family of Brahmavaka represented by Prachaṇḍa at that date. The resumption of Lāṭa by the emperor is clearly recorded in a verse (Nos. XXII, XXIII) which states that out of fear for the valour of Kṛishṇa, the whole of the Kheṭaka-maṇḍala was abandoned by those who were unfriendly to him.

Kṛishṇa's relations with Veṅgī were marked by many vicissitudes. It is probable that Kṛishṇa's unfilial conduct towards his father during his lifetime had rendered him somewhat unpopular among his feudatories, and Guṇaga Vijayāditya of Veṅgī knew this and took full advantage of the situation. In any event Vijayāditya made an effort to repudiate Rāshṭrakūṭa supremacy soon after Amoghavarsha's death, and Kṛishṇa's attempt to reduce him to subjection ended disastrously. Kṛishṇa had to seek the aid of his father-in-law, Kokkala,[59] and brother-in-law, Śaṅkila. In fact he was forced for a time to seek refuge in flight to the Chedi court. The details of the course of events have, however, to be gathered from a number of Eastern Chālukya inscriptions, particularly those which record the achievements of Paṇaṅga, the talented general who led the forces of Guṇaga Vijayāditya. Kṛishṇa II, together with his ally and brother-in-law Śaṅkila, made an attack upon Vijayāditya who had declared independence. The battle ended in a defeat for the allies, and Kṛishṇa had to leave his country and seek safety in the court of his ally at Kiranapura in the Chedi country. Encouraged by his success Vijayāditya planned an expedition against the Chedi country (Ḍāhala) and despatched it under the command of Paṇḍaraṅga.[60] That general took the route through Kaliṅga towards the passes in the Eastern Ghats leading to Southern Kosala and the Central Indian plateau. The kings of Kaliṅga and Kosala and

59 *EI*, I, p. 256, v. 17; II, p. 306, v. 7.

60 *Bharati*, V, i, p. 619; *JTA*, XI, p. 241; III, p. 407; *CP*, No. 15 of 1917-18. *JAHRS*, XI, p. 80; Mad. Govt. Orient. Ms. 15-6-26, I, p. 348-58.

the Chālukya chief of Vémulavāḍa—all friends of the Rāshṭrakūṭas and Chedis, attempted to oppose Paṇḍaraṅga's advance, but in vain. Paṇḍaraṅga succeeded in reaching the Chedi country, devastated Ḍāhala, defeated Kṛishṇa and Śaṅkila in battle, and set fire to Kiraṇapura and Achalapura (modern Kiranpur and Elichpur), two considerable towns in the Chedi kingdom. Vijayāditya's victory was complete, and Kṛishṇa, unable to offer further resistance, sued for peace. Vijayāditya, content with the measure of success he had achieved against his quondam suzerain, satisfied himself with accepting Kṛishṇa's submission. He took over from the vanquished monarch the *pālidhvaja* and the symbols of the rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā, and assuming the title Vallabha, he proclaimed himself Lord Paramount of the entire Dakshiṇāpatha together with the Trikaliṅga country. Kṛishṇa met him in person, propitiated him by offering worship to his arms, and was reinstated in the capital, Mānyakheṭa.

But this was an untenable situation, and the mighty Balhara, as the Arab travellers describe the Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch, was bound to reassert himself. The death of Vijayāditya III in A.D. 892 was the signal for the attempt. The new ruler of Veṅgī was Chālukya-Bhīma I, a nephew of Vijayāditya III. Kṛishṇa invaded Veṅgī in strong force even before Bhīma could celebrate his coronation. The Rāshṭrakūṭas carried everything before them at first, defeated the Eastern Chālukya army, and occupied the greater part of the kingdom of Veṅgī. Kṛishṇa was ably assisted by Baddega, the Chālukya chieftain of Vémulavāḍa, who took Chālukya-Bhīma[61] himself prisoner in a battle fought in the heart of the Veṅgī kingdom. But the Rāshṭrakūṭa success was not permanent. Chālukya-Bhīma I soon regained his freedom though it is not known, how; he was ably assisted by his *sāmantas* and hereditary servants who rallied under the leadership of Kusumāyudha of the Mudigoṇḍa branch of the Chālukyas. These allies of Chālukya-Bhīma succeeded in clearing the country of the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces, enabling Chālukya-Bhīma to celebrate his coronation in peace on 14 April, A.D. 892. Some years later Kṛishṇa II made another attempt to subjugate Veṅgī. He sent an expedition under his intrepid general Guṇḍaya, comprising forces from Karṇāta and Lāṭa. The expedition succeeded in penetrating the kingdom of Veṅgī, but was defeated in two battles, one at Niravadyapura, modern Nidadavol, and the other at Peruvaṅgūru-grāma, modern Pedavaṅgūru. In the second battle Guṇḍaya lost his life and the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces were scattered. But Irimantigaṇḍa, the brave son of Chālukya-Bhīma, who had led the Chālukyan forces to battle, also fell in the fight.

61 *JMU*, XV, pp. 114-16.

Kṛishṇa appears to have entered into matrimonial relationship with the rising power of the Cholas in the Tamil country. A Chola inscription,[62] which may be assigned to the last regnal year of Aditya I, mentions a daughter or Vallava-arayar as the queen of the Chola monarch, and another inscription[63] mentions a son of Aditya, Kannaradeva by name. It is clear that the Chola queen must have been a daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II. Trouble arose as a result of this marriage between the Cholas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas when, at the death of Aditya I Parāntaka ascended the Chola throne and prince Kannara was kept out of it. Kṛishṇa espoused the cause of his grandson, and invaded the Chola territory with the assistance of the Bāṇas, early in the reign of Parāntaka I. Parāntaka was aided by the Gaṅga ruler Pṛithivīpati II. The Sholingar rock inscription[64] of the ninth year of Parāntaka, 916, mentions that the Gaṅga Pṛithivīpati II distinguished himself in a battle at Vallāla and got the title Bāṇādhirāja from Parāntaka. The Udayendiram plates of Pṛithivīpati II[65] state that Parāntaka uprooted two Bāṇa kings and conquered the Vaidumbas. Lastly, the Kanyākumārī[66] inscription of Vīrarājendra states that Parāntaka earned for himself the title Vīrachola by his victory over the invincible Kṛishṇarāja. Taking all this evidence together we may conclude that there was a Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion of the Chola country in which the Bāṇas and perhaps the Vaidumbas also took the part of their suzerain Kṛishṇa II, that the invasion was resisted by Parāntaka I and his Gaṅga ally Pṛithivīpati II and that the decisive engagement in the war took place at Vallāla, modern Tiruvallam in the North Arcot district. The result was a disaster for the Rāshṭrakūṭa and his allies. The defeat in the battle was followed by the termination of Bāṇa rule and the annexation of their territory of the Chola empire under the rulership of Pṛithivīpati II who became a feudatory of the Chola monarch (*c.* 910). The Vaidumbas seem also to have suffered for the support they gave to Kṛishṇa II.[67]

The military record of the reign of Kṛishṇa II was thus by no means brilliant. The only success of the reign was the termination of the Lāṭa viceroyalty, an achievement of doubtful wisdom. The slight success against Prathīhāra Bhoja was due largely to the credit of the

62 14 of 1920.
63 39 of 1895.
64 *EI*, IV, p. 221.
65 *SII*, II, No. 76, v. 9.
66 *TAS*, III, p. 143, v. 58.
67 Cf. A. S. Ramanatha Iyer in *EI*, XXVI, p. 112. In his *Uttarapurāṇa* Gunabhadra says that Kṛishṇa's elephants enjoyed the cool breeze under the shade of the sandal forests near the Cape Comorin. This may be no more than a reference to the dynastic alliance with Āditya I — N. V. Ramanayya, *PIHC*, VI, p. 167.

Lāṭa viceroy. The wars Kṛishṇa undertook against Veṅgī and the Cholas got him on the whole nothing but disaster and disgrace.

The inscriptions of the reign disclose the rule of a son of Baṅkeśa called Lokaṭeyarsa who governed in A.D. 902 a large tract of country comprising 31,102 (mistake for 30,102?) villages made up of Banavāsi 12,000, Palāsige 12,000, Mānyakheṭa 6,000, Kolanu 30, Lokapura 12 and Toṛegare 60.[68] His correct name was Lokāditya and he ruled over the Banavāsi province for some years before the date above mentioned. He was the patron of the Jaina writer Guṇabhadra who says that he finished his *Uttarapurāṇa* in the Piṅgala Saṁvatsara (Ś. 820, A.D. 897) when Lokāditya of Chellaketana family, feudatory of Kṛishṇa II, was ruling from Baṅkāpura, modern Bankapur in the Dharwar district.[69] Lokāditya appears to have had some minor conflicts with the Gaṅgas.[70] But, speaking generally, the Gaṅga country continued to occupy a feudatory position in the empire under Kṛishṇa. A certain Vinayāmbudhi was ruling Belvola in A.D. 902.[71]

Kṛishṇa II had a son known to us only by his title Jagattuṅga. He married two Chedi princesses, both daughters of Śaṅkaragaṇa Raṇavigraha, a son of Kokkala I. He had a son by each of them, Indra III by Lakshmī, and Amoghavarsha III by Govindāmbā, her sister.[72] Jagattuṅga is said to have been led to heaven by fate before he obtained the kingdom as if at the particular request of the heavenly damsels (No. XXIV). One wonders if this is a covert reference to Jagattuṅga having lost his life in a battle-field.[73]

VI. RECOVERY

The latest date for Kṛishṇa II is 912,[74] and the earliest for Indra, the son of Jagattuṅga and successor of Kṛishṇa, is the date of his Nausari (Bagumra) grant (No. XXI) corresponding to 24 February A.D. 915, the day on which he is said to have gone to a place called Kurundaka, probably modern Kurundwad in 'Kolhapur state', for his coronation. Indra's accession may therefore be placed early in A.D. 915. Indra had the titles *Nityavarsha* (constant rainer), *Raṭṭakandarpa* (Eros among the Raṭṭas), *Kīrti-Nārāyana* and *Rājamārtaṇḍa* (Sun among kings). His queen was Bijāmbā, daughter of the Chedi prince Ammaṇadeva, grandson of Kokkala I (No. XXIII). A verse in the

68 *MAR*, 1911, p. 38.
69 *BG*, I, ii, p. 411.
70 *MAR*, 1914-15, p. 45; *EC*, IX, Bn. 83-87.
71 *EI*, XIII, p. 192.
72 Ins. Nos. XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXVIII.
73 Ins. No. XXVIII, ll. 19-20, on Jagattuṅga undertaking wars of conquest.
74 *SII*, XI (1), No. 29.

Nausari (really Bagumra)[75] plates says that Indrarāja, who had lightly uprooted Meru, felt no elation at his conquest of Upendra who had lifted Govardhana. This clever conceit of the poet undoubtedly refers to events that most probably took place before the accession of Indra to the throne. The reference to Indra uprooting Meru is not easy to explain. Kielhorn suggested[76] that Meru may be Kanauj. But we do not know of any occasion after the war of Kṛishṇa II with Mihira Bhoja when the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Gurjaras came into conflict. That war was fought before A.D. 888, and one may doubt if Indra III was then old enough to take part in it. The chances are that Meru was a Bāṇa prince of the south, most probably Vikramāditya I, Jayameru.[77] Fortunately, there is no uncertainty about the identity of Upendra. He is beyond doubt the founder of the Paramāra line of Mālava. The Harasola grants, the earliest records of the Paramāras, show that they were the feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and the genealogy of the Paramāras found in these grants is certainly to be preferred to the longer pedigree of the later records which duplicate the first three generations.[78] It seems probable that in the closing years of the reign of Kṛishṇa II, when he was engaged in the wars with the Chola Parāntaka, Upendra Paramāra who was establishing his power in Mālava, invaded the Rāshṭrakūṭa dominions from the north and reached as far as Govardhana in the Nasik district. Indra III, who was then *yuvarāja*, met the invader, defeated him, and compelled him to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Rāshṭrakūṭa power. The empire thus continued undiminished in the north, Lāṭa being once more incorporated in it and Mālava being held by a feudatory line.[79]

Soon after he came to the throne Indra undertook an invasion of Northern India. This is prominently mentioned in the inscriptions. The Cambay plates (No. XXII) state that the precincts of Kālapriya (Kalpi)[79a] were made uneven by the strokes of the tusks of the rutting elephants of Indra, that his horses crossed the Jumna resembling the ocean in its depths, and that after his expedition the enemy city of Mahodaya (great prosperity) was totally destroyed and came to be known to people as Kuśasthalī (meadow), a clever play upon the well-known names of Kanauj, the Gurjara-Pratīhāra capital.

The enemy against whom Indra fought was Mahīpāla I (A.D. 913-43). Mahīpāla had come to the throne after a war with his half-

75 Ins. No. XXI, v. 23. For name Bagumra see *EI*, VII, app. p. 15, No. 5.

76 *EI*, VII, app. p. 16, n 2.

77 See section on Bāṇas, ch. X.

78 *PAIOC*, Madras, 1926, pp. 303-8.

79 H. C. Ray, *DHNI*, pp. 841-43.

79a *History of the Deccan*, I, p. ?

brother Bhoja II who had received support from the Chedi king Kokkala.[80] The Rāshṭrakūṭas had close ties with the Chedis and Mahīpāla's enmity with the Chedis must have been the main cause of Indra's invasion. Indra was assisted in this expedition by Narasiṁha II, the Chālukya feudatory of Vémulavāḍa, perhaps also the husband of his sister Jakkavve.[81] The achievements of Narasiṁha II are detailed at some length by Pampa in the introduction to his *Vikramārjunavijaya* (vv. 31-38). Pampa mentions the Lāṭas among the enemies of Narasiṁha and states that he burned and ravaged the seven Mālavas, defeated the Gurjararāja in battle, and seized his elephants. Narasiṁha descended on Mahīpāla like a thunderbolt, says the poet, adding a picturesque description of Mahīpāla's flight without food or rest. Narasiṁha then bathed his horses in the waters of the Ganges and finally came and camped in Kālapriya. It is clear that Mahīpāla suffered a great disaster, lost his kingdom for a time, and had to seek refuge in flight. He appears to have regained his kingdom a little later with the aid of the Chandella ruler Harshadeva.[82] The exact date of the invasion cannot be determined, but it may be placed between A.D. 915 and 920. The advance of the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces through Lāṭa and Mālava right up to Kalpi and Kanauj and the dethronement of Mahīpāla were no doubt great military achievements of the Rāshṭrakūṭa ruler.

Indra III wanted to bring Veṅgī under his control and with this object he gave support to some relatives and feudatories of the Eastern Chālukya king Amma I, and created serious trouble for him. But Amma was a brave prince and, with the help of a few officers who remained faithful to him, he was able to stand up to his enemies, establish himself firmly on the throne, and rule the kingdom for seven years till A.D. 929.[83] Indra's reign came to a close towards the end of A.D. 927 and not in 918 or 919 as was believed till recently.[84]

Indra was followed on the throne by his son Amoghavarsha II. He had a short reign of one year according to the Bhadana grant of Śilāhāra Aparājita (A.D. 997).[85] Rāshṭrakuṭa grants (Nos. XXIV, XXV, XXVI) state that Amoghavarsha followed his father quickly to heaven, as if to evince his filial love. All circumstances point to some foul play on the part of his younger brother, the ambitious Govinda IV. The

80 *EI*, II, p. 300.
81 *JMU*, XV, p. 121.
82 *EI*, 1, p. 122, line 10.
83 *SII*, I, No. 30.
84 *EI*, XXVI, p. 161. Some scholars believe that he ruled till the end of A.D. 928 *EI*, XXXII, 50) [Ed.]
85 *EI*, III, p. 271.

earliest date for Govinda occurs in an inscription from Daṇḍāpūr dated A.D. 918-919.[86] The inscription does not give him any imperial titles but calls him Prabhūtavarsha, and in Govinda's own Cambay plates (No. XXII) there is a tell-tale verse (v. 22) in which he affirms that he did not practise cruelty to his elder brother though it lay in his power to do so, that he did not attract ill-fame to himself by living with the wives of his relatives and other evil ways, and that he did not turn himself into a demon (*piśācha*) by being indifferent to the distinction between purity and impurity. Lastly, Govinda ignores Amoghavarsha's rule in his inscriptions and describes himself as meditating on the feet of Nityavarsha-Indra III and not his immediate predecessor. There is no mention of Amoghavarsha at all in the Sangli (No. XXIII) plates. These facts are enough to show that there was no love lost between the two brothers from the beginning; though the younger son, Govinda, was the more ambitious of the two brothers and managed fairly early to get a hand in the administration of the kingdom; the throne went to the elder son by right on the death of Indra III, and possibly with his approval; but this was more than the impatient Govinda could bear. It is very likely that he intrigued in some way to shorten the reign and the life of his elder brother.

Govinda achieved the object of his ambition early in A.D. 930, and the Cambay (No. XXII) plates issued by him on 10 May of that year show the great pomp with which he celebrated his coronation soon after. They state that on that day the king had come from his capital Mānyakheṭa to the village Kapitthaka near the bank of the Godāvarī, performed the *tulāpurusha* ceremony on the occasion of his coronation and made magnificent gifts to Brāhmaṇas and temples, six hundred *agrahāras* and 3,00,000 *suvarṇas* to the former, and 800 villages, 4,00,000 *suvaraṇas* and 32,00,000 *drammas* to the latter. Well did Govinda deserve his titles *Suvarṇavarsha* (rainer of gold) and *Prabhūtavarsha* (abundant rainer). He had also the titles *Chāṇakya-chaturmukha, Vikrānta Nārāyaṇa* and *Nṛipati Triṇetra*. In beauty of person he is said to have excelled the god of love and borne the title *Nityakandarpa* on that account. The popular form of his name was Gojjiga which occurs in Kalas inscriptions[87] and elsewhere. That inscription mentions the grant of a town in *sarvanamasya* tenure to the Brahmin Daṇḍanāyakas, Revadāsa Dīkshita and Visottara Dīkshita, but says nothing of how they earned the gift. We hear little of Govinda's achievements on the field, and the statement in his grants that Gaṅgā and Yamunā were serving in his noble palace does not seem

86 *IA*, XII, p. 223.
87 *EI*, XIII, p. 326.

to contain any history. It occurs in the midst of empty praise of Govinda in several verses in the Cambay (No. XXII) and the Sangli (XXIII) plates.

In later Rāshṭrakūṭa grants (Nos. XXIV, XXV, XXVI) Gövinda is said to have succumbed to the snare of women, led a dissolute life, alienated all the elements in the State, and ultimately lost his kingdom. By a clever *double entendre* the verse also hints that the king lost his health and the natural beauty of his person and contracted consumption. This is confirmed by the Kharepatan grant of Śilāhāra Raṭṭarāja (A.D. 1008)[88] saying that Govinda was the abode of the sentiment of love, and always surrounded by a group of dancing women.

After the death of Amma there was confusion in Veṅgī again as his son Béta Vijayāditya V, a mere lad, was ousted from his throne within a fortnight of his accession. This was the act of Tāḷa I, son of Yuddhamalla I. Tāḷa must have owed his success, to some extent, to Rashṭrakūṭa's help. In his turn he was overthrown within a month by Vikramāditya II, uncle of Amma I. Vikramāditya came to a violent end in less than a year at the hands of Bhīma II, one of the sons of Amma I. These dissensions in the elder branch of the Eastern Chālukyas furnished an excellent opportunity for Govinda IV. He supported Yuddhamalla II, son of Tāḷa I, and enabled him to displace Bhīma II and seize the Veṅgī kingdom. But Yuddhamalla became king only in name; he had very little power and a good part of the kingdom passed under the occupation of the Rāshṭrakūṭa officers and nobles who paid little heed to his authority. An Eastern Chālukya inscription[89] states in so many words that the commanders of the Vallabha and others apportioned the territory among themselves and held it for seven years.

Light is shed on the revolution that terminated the rule of Govinda by the inscriptions of the Chālukyas of Vémulavāḍa and Pampa's poem.[90] We learn from the inscriptions that Arikesarī II of Vémulavāḍa, the patron of Pampa, had married Revakanirmaḍi, the daughter of Indra III, and that he gave protection to a certain Bijja or Vijayāditya who sought refuge with him from the anger of Govindarāja. Pampa adds some further details. He says that the Vijayāditya, who fled to Arikesarī from Govinda's wrath, was a Chālukya, and that Govindarāja was Sakala-Chakravartī, meaning probably that he was the suzerain both of Vijayāditya and Arikesarī. When Arikesarī gave shelter to Vijayāditya, Govinda sent many *sāmantas* against him and Arikesarī

88 *EI*, III. p. 298; ll. 10-11.
89 *ARE*, 1917, Pt. II, Para 24.
90 *JMU*, XV, pp. 120-25.

fought and won against all of them and became the crest jewel of the *sāmantas.* He then fought against Govinda himself, ruined him, and bestowed the empire on Baddega who had come to him for aid. Lastly, with only one elephant he overthrew Bappuva, the younger brother of Kakkala, when Bappuva came and attacked him with a host of elephants.

To complete the picture we must recall the statement in the Rāshṭrakūṭa grants (Nos. XXIV, XXV) that feudatories of the empire requested Baddega Amoghavarsha III, the son of Jagattuṅga, to accept the Rāshṭrakūṭa crown and save the honour of the Raṭṭa kingdom. They also state that Amoghavarsha was persuaded to accede to the request of the feudatories by God Pinākī (Śiva) who wanted to promote the fame of family of Vishṇu, i.e. the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Amoghavarsha, it may be noted, had married Kundakadevī, the daughter of Yuvarāja I of Chedi (No. XXIII), and he is known to have spent some time in the Chedi court as he is said to have been there at the time when his daughter Revakanirmaḍi was married to Gaṅga Būtuga II.[91]

The course of events is now fairly clear. Govinda was a wicked king and a reckless debauchee. His life and rule, quite in keeping with the method by which he acquired the throne, provoked universal resentment. It seems probable that the noble and saintly Amoghavarsha III sought to correct Govinda's ways, and failing in his endeavour, which led only to differences with the ruling monarch, withdrew to the court of his father-in-law in the Chedi kingdom. There were rebellions in the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire, and the feudatories banded themselves together against the monarch. Pampa's version of the events is naturally calculated to glorify the part played by his patron Arikesarī II in the events. But behind all exaggeration we can detect that that chieftain took a leading part in the revolution which ended in the defeat and dethronement of Govinda IV and the transfer of the crown to Amoghavarsha III, who was invited to return from the Chedi court to Mānyakheṭa and accept the Rāshṭrakūṭa crown. The identity of Chālukya Vijayāditya, whose flight from Govinda's anger starts the revolution according to Pampa, is by no means clear at present, though the suggestion may be made that it was Bijayata, the son of Kusumāyudha I of Mudugoṇḍa, or even the Eastern Chālukya Vijayāditya V who continued his struggle for the throne for some years after his deposition. As for Bappuva, the brother of Kakkala who fought on the side of Govinda and was defeated by Arikesarī, it is best to accept the identification of Kakkala with a prince who,

91 Sudi plates.

according to an unpublished Silāhāra grant,[92] was defeated by Amoghavarsha.

The transfer of the crown must have taken place some time in 934-35. Govinda is mentioned as the ruling monarch in the inscriptions of his Santāra feudatories of Banavāsi in A.D. 934. But Santāra inscriptions of 935 do not refer to him.[93] Eastern Chālukya king Bhīma II took advantage of the confusion due to the revolution and succeeded in expelling the Rāshṭrakūṭas from Veṅgī and restoring its independence and peace. In the Eastern Chālukya grants,[94] Bhīma is said to have defeated the terrible and fierce army despatched against him by Govindarāja, slain several Rāshṭrakūṭa generals, beaten the valorous Yuddhamalla II, and proclaimed himself king, and celebrated his coronation in A.D. 934-35.

It seems probable that the chief queen of Govinda IV was a Chola princess by name Vīramādéviyar, the daughter of Parāntaka I. This becomes evident from two inscriptions[95] of the thirty-first year (A.D. 938) of Parāntaka I found at Takkolam. What happened to Govinda himself at the end of the revolution is not known, and by the date of the Takkolam records the unfortunate queen of Govinda might have found it prudent to withdraw to her father's court. At any rate it is not easy to accept, without further evidence, the suggestion that has been made that Govinda IV withdrew to the court of Chola Parāntaka I, that that ruler made an effort to restore his son-in-law to the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne, and that the invasion of the Chola territories by Kṛishṇa III was of the nature of a reprisal. There is not even the remotest hint of all this in our sources and Kṛishṇa's invasion of the Chola country can very well be explained, on other grounds.

VII. THE LAST PHASE

Amoghavarsha III had a short reign of four to five years. His character seems to have been gentle and peaceful and strongly marked by a religious turn of mind. He is described as the foremost among the wise men (Nos. XXV, XXVI) and a well-behaved and peaceful *muni*.[96] The pressure of the *sāmantas,* the need to save the fair name of the royal family, and possibly the ambition of his young and energetic son Kṛishṇa III, must all have had a share in inducing Amoghavarsha to step out of his retirement in his old age to occupy

92 Altekar, *Rāshṭrakūṭas,* p. 110.

93 *EC,* VII, Honnali 21-23, A.D. 934, and Shikarpur 194 and 322, A.D. 935.

94 *IA,* XII, p. 249; *EI,* IX, p. 47; XII, p. 249.

95 *EI,* XXVI, p. 230.

96 Kharepatan.

the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne, and he did so only after getting in some form divine approval for the course.

The earliest date for him found in an inscription is 7 September A.D. 937.[97] The only facts recorded about him are that he gave away many villages to Brahmins and built many temples of Śiva, and thus his fame spread throughout the world.[98] But the practical conduct of government appears to have vested in his son Kṛishṇa III who became *yuvarāja* very early in Amoghavarsha's reign, if not at the time of his accession; and we shall be justified in placing in Amoghavarsha's reign all the events ascribed to Kṛishṇa as *yuvarāja* in his records. The Deoli plates (May, A.D. 940, No. XXIV) compare Kṛishṇarāja to Kumāra, Kumāra meaning both crown-prince and Subrahmaṇya, and state that his enemies who disobeyed him fell of their own accord; that he killed the wicked Dantiga and Vappuga, uprooted the poisonous tree Rachchhāyamalla, and planted in Gaṅgavāḍi the sacred tree of Bhūtārya; and that after destroying numbers of Gaṅgas who were his enemies, he defeated the Pallava Anniga and reduced him to a bad plight. Hearing of his conquests of all the strongholds in the South, the Gurjara lost all hope about Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa; feudatories in all India from Himālayas to Siṁhala bowed to him out of fear, though he was himself subject to his father's orders; it was after seeing his fame well established that his father, the best of sages, ended his life. It is thus clear that Kṛishṇa assisted his brother-in-law Būtuga II in a war against Rājamalla and enabled him to attain the Gaṅga throne. This fact is confirmed by the Chitaldurg inscription already mentioned as giving the earliest date for Amoghavarsha III. The reference to many Gaṅga enemies is, of course, rhetorical, and the identity of Dantiga and Vappuga is not clear, though we may surmise from the context that they were the generals or feudatories of Rājamalla. Anniga[99] was of course the Nolamba-Pallava who must have taken the side of Rājamalla, too.

The reference to the Gurjara losing all hope of gaining Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa has not been correctly understood. The question has been complicated by a verse occuring in the Karhad plates of 959 (No. XXV), though not in the much earlier Deoli plates (No. XXIV). This verse, which is a mere literary conceit of the writer of the *praśasti*, has been mistaken for the record of a historical fact and a conquest of the Chedi kingdom by Kṛishṇa has been postulat-

97 *EC*, XI, Chitaldurg 76.

98 Ins. No. XXVIII, v. 15.

99 For an early reference to Anniga A.D. 922 in the reign of Indra III see *SII*, IX (I), Nos. 57-58 (271 and 272 of 1918).

ed.[100] In view of the close and continuous friendly relations between the Chedis and the Rāshṭrakūṭas such a conquest must be regarded as very unlikely. On the contrary the strength of the Rāshṭrakūṭas was the strength of the Chedi kingdom, and the reference to the Gurjara ruler losing hope of Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa must be interpreted to mean that the successes of Kṛishṇa in the South produced reactions in the politics of Northern India, and forced the chief enemy of the Chedi kingdom, viz the Gurjara king, to think twice before undertaking an expedition against that country.

The earliest inscription giving the imperial titles for Kṛishṇa III is dated 23 December, A.D. 939[101], and Kṛishṇa is known to have become king only after his father's death. The Deoli and Karhad plates (Nos. XXIV and XXV) leave no room for uncertainty on this point. Therefore Amoghavarsha's death and Kṛishṇa's accession must have taken place some time before 23 December, A.D. 939.[102] The name of Kṛishṇa often appears in inscriptions in its Prākṛit form Kannara, and his special title was *Akālavarsha.* The Gaṅga Būtuga is said to have helped Kṛishṇa soon after the death of Amoghavarsha in attaining the throne by putting down an opponent by name Lalleya, wresting from his hands the State elephant, horses, the white umbrella, and the throne, and bestowing them on Kṛishṇa.[103] We have no indication from any other source that Kṛishṇa had any difficulty at the time of accession, and nothing is heard of Lalleya's identity also; this statement about Būtuga's aid to Kṛishṇa occurs in a record which is generally considered spurious. The Deoli plates (No. XXIV), issued by Kṛishṇa in May 940, record a gift of land for the merit of his younger brother, Jagattuṅga Deva, and say nothing of any military undertakings of Kṛishṇa after his coronation. We hear nothing more of Jagattuṅga who is said to have been dearer to Kṛishṇa than his own life. Kṛishṇa, as we shall see, was succeeded on the throne by Khoṭṭiga, and he by the son of his brother Nirupama. Khoṭṭiga and Nirupama were doubtless step-brothers of Kṛishṇa.

In the Karhad plates (No. XXV) Kṛishṇa is said to have undertaken the conquest of the southern quarter, to have uprooted the Chola dynasty, distributed the Chola kingdom among his servants, to have

100 Altekar, *Rāshṭrakūṭas*, p. 113. A similar mistake was made for long over verse 82 of the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates of Rājendra Chola I. See *JOR*, XVI (1946), p. 155.

101 *EC*, VII, Sb. 476.

102 *EI*, XXI, pp. 261-62. I am inclined to accept that the date of the Isaṁudra inscription (*EC*, XI, Cd. 77) has to be regarded as incorrect. See also *EI*, XXVI, pp. 164-65.

103 *EI*, III, p. 180, lines 52-53.

levied tribute from the Chera, Pāṇḍya and Siṁhala, and erected a pillar of victory proclaiming his fame at Rāmeśvara. The plates themselves were issued from the king's camp at Mélpāḍi in the North Arcot district. Two years later he was still in the same camp when the Kolhāpur plates (No. XXVI) of Akālavarsha were issued. The extent of Krishṇa's conquests, as detailed in the Karhad plates, is confirmed by the testimony of Somadevasūri who finished his *Yaśastilakā* within a few months of the date of the Karhad plates (No. XXV) and at the end of the work speaks of Krishṇarāja's conquest in almost the same terms.

Krishṇa's southern expedition was in fact one of the earliest military enterprises and the most extensive of his reign. We have seen that the rising power of the Cholas under Parāntaka I had already led to conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭas and their feudatories, the Bāṇas and the Vaidumbas, in the reign of Krishṇa II. On that occasion the Rāshṭrakūṭas suffered a defeat, and the Bāṇas lost a good deal of their territory, and Parāntaka was very ably assisted by Gaṅga Prithivīpati II. The accession of Būtuga II to the Gaṅga throne with the aid of his brother-in-law Krishṇa, followed within a short time by the accession of Krishṇa III himself to the Rāshṭrakūṭa throne, and the death of Prithivīpati II, altered the balance of political forces to the disadvantage of Parāntaka; and the Bāṇas and the Vaidumbas were doubtless urging Krishṇa to aid them in recovering their lost territory and teaching the powerful Chola a lesson. Krishṇa was in the prime of life, and not reluctant to seize the favourable moment to make an advance to the south. Parāntaka in his turn was not unmindful of possible trouble from this quarter, and he stationed two of his sons Rājāditya and Arikulakesarī in the north-western frontier of the Chola empire to co-operate with Prithivīpati II in resisting the reaction to the aggressive policy that he had followed against the Rāshṭrakūṭas and their vassals. When Prithivīpati died, the defence of this quarter passed entirely into the hands of Rājāditya and his brother.[104]

The chronology of Krishṇa's campaign can be determined only roughly. The exact year when the invasion began is not known, but there is no doubt that the turning point was reached in A.D 949 when a decisive engagement took place at Takkolam, six miles to the south-east of Arkonam in the North Arcot district. The Ātakūr inscription of Būtuga tells us that Kannaradeva 'was making a display of triumph after fighting against and killing the Mūvaḍi Chola Rājāditya at a place called Takkola'. It also adds that 'when Kannaradeva

104 *Colas*, I, pp. 154-55.

was fighting the Chola, Būtuga made the *howdah* the battle-field, and aimed at, pierced, and killed Rājāditya'—an act for which Kṛishṇa rewarded him by granting him the district of Banavāsi 12,000, Belvola 300, Purigere 300, Kisukad 70, and Bagenad 70.[105] Lastly, Būtuga was ably assisted in the fight by his lieutenant Maṇalera whom he rewarded with the gift of Ātakūr 12 and the village of Kādiyūr in the Belvola district as a military fief (*bāḷgaḷchu*). The Chola records confirm the manner of Rājāditya's death, and say that Chakravartin Kannaradeva Vallabha entered Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam after the overthrow of Rājāditya in Ś. 871 (A.D. 949).[106]

Even the decisive battle at Takkolam did not mean the total collapse of resistance to Kṛishṇa's advance, and he had some years of hard fighting before he could establish himself in the south. Inscriptions bearing his name and regnal years do not appear in the Chola country till his 15th year, A.D. 953. There is indeed one record[107] from the South Arcot district which purports to be dated in his 5th year. But as the record is a later copy, its date must be presumed to be a mistake. Inscriptions[108] from South Arcot, dated in the years A.D. 952-54, record gifts of minor chieftains who do not acknowledge either Chola or Rāshṭrakūṭa supremacy—clear evidence of political dislocation, consequent on the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion. We have no Chola records from North Arcot, South Arcot, and Chingleput for many years after the battle of Takkolam. Kṛishṇa's records, with dates ranging from the 15th to the 28th regnal year, are found in the same area, justifying his claim that he captured part of the Chola country, distributed it among his servants, and built temples in it. By assuming the title *Kachchiyum-Tañjāiyum-koṇḍa* Kṛishṇa claimed to have captured Kāñchīpuram, and Tañjāvūr (Tanjore). The spurious Sudi plates state that Būtuga after conquering Rājāditya assaulted Tanjore, Nalkote, and a number of other fortresses, and handed over to Kṛishṇa elephants, horses, and a vast amount of treasure captured from them. The Karhad (No. XXV) plates, we have seen, take him as far as Rāmeśvaram and Ceylon. We cannot say for certain if these are merely empty boasts or the record of a triumphant raid across the southern countries. No inscription of Kṛishṇa or his vassals has been found south of the latitude of Pondichery. But there can be no question that the effect of his invasion on the Chola empire was ruinous in the extreme.

Kṛishṇa found occasion, like most of his predecessors, to interfere

105 *EI*, VI, pp. 55-57.
106 428 of 1902. *EI*, VII, p. 194. See also *Colas*, I, p. 155-62.
107 375 of 1909.
108 338 and 356 of 1902.

in the affairs of Veṅgī. There Chālukya-Bhīma II was succeeded by his second son Amma II, a lad of twelve years, his elder half-brother Dānārṇava being passed over for some reason that is not clear. Though Dānārṇava apparently acquiesced in this arrangement for a time, Amma was not left undisturbed. Soon after his coronation in 945, the two sons of Yuddhamalla II, Bādapa and Tāḷa II, encouraged by the support they received from some disaffected nobles in the Veṅgī kingdom and from Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III, invaded Veṅgī with a strong army. Amma II abandoned the struggle and fled the country. Bādapa proclaimed himself king under the title of Vijayāditya and was succeeded by his younger brother Tāḷa II,[109] Vishṇuvardhana. The rule of Tāḷa lasted only a short time. The disloyal nobles of Veṅgī now changed their attitude towards Amma and favoured his return. Nṛipakāma, the chief of Kolanu, gave him one of his daughters in marriage and espoused his cause warmly. Amma slew Tāḷa II in battle and took possession of the kingdom. But this was not the end of his troubles. Kṛishṇa III began to espouse the cause of Dānārṇava and sent an expedition about A.D. 956 against Amma. Amma had once more to seek safety in exile and fled to Kaliṅga. Dānārṇava became king of Veṅgī under the aegis of Kṛishṇa. But the Rāshṭrakūṭa power in Vengī was only shortlived at this time. Amma once more returned from exile when the Rāshṭrakūṭa armies withdrew, wrested the kingdom from Dānārṇava and ruled it until A.D. 970, when he was slain in battle[110] by Dānārṇava who had headed another rebellion against him. It is not clear what part the Rāshṭrakūṭas played in the last stages of this confused struggle.

Towards the close of his reign Kṛishṇa undertook an expedition to Northern India of which, however, the details are far from clear. The expedition must have started some time in or after A.D. 963; for Mārasiṁha II, the son of Būtuga II, not by the Rāshṭrakūṭa princess Revakanirmaḍi, but by a Kollabbarasi, came to the throne in that year after the death of his father. We learn from his Kudlur plates[111] (963) that Kṛishṇa crowned him king before undertaking the northern expedition. The undated Jura *praśasti* (No. XXVII), which clearly refers to the completion of the southern campaigns of Kṛishṇa, is clear proof of the reality of the expedition, but who the enemy was against whom Kṛishṇa proceeded can only be surmised. The Gaṅga Mārasiṁha seems to have taken part in this expedition and his Sravaṇa Belgoḷa epitaph[112] says that he became known as the king of

109 *EI*, XIX, pp. 137 and 148. Cp. No. 6 of 1938-39.
110 Elliot's collection. Madras Govt. Oriental Mss. Library, 15.6.26, i, p. 348.
111 *MAR*, 1921, p. 17.
112 *EI*, V, p. 179.

the Gurjaras by conquering the northern region for Kṛishṇarāja, destroyed the pride of the mighty Alla who set himself in opposition to Vanagajamalla (i.e. Kṛishṇa III), preserved by his prowess the throne and all the other insignia of royalty of Gaṇḍamārtāṇḍa (Kṛishṇa), and dispersed the bands of Kirātas who dwelt on the skirts of the forests of the Vindhya mountains. Two captains of Mārasiṁha's forces bear the name Ujjayinībhujaṅgas.[113] It seems clear from all this that the chief enemy of Kṛishṇa III at this time must have been the Paramāra ruler of Mālava, Harsha Sīyaka. Sīyaka acknowledges Kṛishṇa's supremacy in his Harsola copper plate grant of A.D. 949 when the sphere of his rule included Kheṭaka (Khaira). He must have taken advantage of Kṛishṇa's pre-occupation with the southern expedition to throw off his allegiance to the Rāshṭrakūṭas and form alliances against them. Kṛishṇa, with the aid of Mārasiṁha, was evidently able to re-establish his supremacy, though only after a hard struggle with Sīyaka and his allies in the course of which the Rāshṭrakūṭa armies advanced up to Ujjain, the capital of Mālava on the one hand, while on the other Kṛishṇa himself was about to lose his royal insignia to the enemy and rescued from the fate by the plucky Mārasiṁha.

Before leaving Kṛishṇa's reign we must say something about his feudatories, particularly of the position of Gaṅga Būtuga in addition to what has been stated already. An inscription from Roṇ[114] shows him ruling Belvola 300 and Purigere 300 besides Gaṅgavāḍi 96,000 already in A.D. 942. If this is correct, the statement in the Ātakūr inscription[115] that these districts were included in the reward that Būtuga got from Kṛishṇa III for his loyalty and bravery in the field of Takkolam becomes questionable, and the Hebbal inscription of A.D. 975, which says that Būtuga got these districts as well as Kisukad 70, and Bagenaḍ 70 as dowry from Amoghavarsha III on the occasion of his marriage with Revakanirmaḍi becomes more trustworthy than has been so far considered. It seems probable that after Takkolam Kṛishṇa handed over to Būtuga Banavāsi 12,000 and at the same time made him the absolute proprietor of these other districts instead of his holding them merely as the dowry of his wife.[116] The Roṇ inscription also records that Būtuga attacked that place, and that a certain Pampayya of the Vāji family fell in the fight that ensued on 24

113 *EC*. XI, Holakere 23 and 33.

114 *SII*. XI, i, No. 36.

115 *EI*. IV, p. 352.

116 Fleet suggested (*EI*. VI, p. 52, n. 2) that Būtuga must have been deprived of Belvola and Purigere by Yeṛrayappa and Rājamalla. There is no evidence for this, and even if such a thing had occurred, Kṛishṇa must have set matters right when as *yuvarāja* he helped Būtuga to gain the Gaṅga throne after a war with Rājamalla.

April A.D. 942. The occasion for the attack and the fight is not clear. But the record is a clear testimony that the peace of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire was liable to be disturbed by local disputes in which the feudatories of the empire felt free to employ their forces as they liked. Another record from Kurtkoti,[117] Gadag district, Dharwar taluk, shows Būtuga II still ruling Belvola and Purigere in October 946, while yet another record from Naregal,[118] dated A.D. 950, states that Būtayya Permāḍi was ruling Gaṅgavāḍi 96,000 extending as far as Peldore (the great river), i.e. the Krishṇā. This series of records shows the great power of Būtuga in the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire. His sway extended over much of what should really have been regarded as home territory and directly administered by the emperor himself. Būtuga's son, Mārasiṁha II, continued to rule over all these districts like Būtuga himself. How neglectful Krishṇa III was of feudal developments likely to endanger the stability of his empire is also seen from the fact that he gave the province of Tardavāḍi 1000 near the heart of the empire as *aṇuṅgajīvita* (military fief) to Āhavamalla Tailaparasa of the Satyāśraya family some time before March A.D. 965.[119] This favour shown to Tailaparasa spelt the ruin of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire; for within a few years of Krishṇa's death, Tailapa felt himself strong enough to overthrow the Rāshṭrakūṭa ruler, and establish his own sway as independent monarch, thus laying the foundations of the Western Chālukya empire of Kalyāṇī.

Krishṇa's reign was thus marked by visible signs of disintegration of the empire. His greatness as a soldier is indeed attested by the early wars he waged as crown prince on behalf of his brother-in-law Būtuga, and perhaps by the successes of Rāshṭrakūṭa arms in the confused struggles that went on in the Veṇgī kingdom. But in the wars against the Cholas and the Paramāras he seems to have depended more on the martial abilities of his overmighty Gaṅga feudatories than on the strength of his own arms. However that may be, Krishṇa cannot be credited with even the primary elements of statesmanship. He allowed momentary personal feelings to betray him into courses of action which proved politically disastrous to the empire. The way in which he rewarded Būtuga and Tailapa shows Krishṇa to have been a grateful friend but by no means a wise emperor.

The latest regnal year of Krishṇa, mentioned in his Tamil inscriptions from Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, is the 28th, and this accords with the

117 *SII*, XI, i, No. 37.
118 *Ibid.*, No. 38.
119 *Ibid.*, No. 40.

date of the Kolagallu inscription,[120] 17 February A.D. 967, engraved soon after the death of Kṛishṇa III. He died therefore late in A.D. 966 or very early in 967.

He was succeeded by his half-brother Khoṭṭiga, the son of Amoghavarsha III by Kandagadevī, the daughter of Yuvarājadeva of Chedi.[121] Kṛishṇa III had a son, the father of the prince who afterwards became Indra IV, but he seems to have predeceased his father.

Khoṭṭiga had the titles, *Nityavarsha* and *Raṭṭakandarpa*.[122] Jagattuṅga, the younger brother of Kṛishṇa mentioned in the Deoli plates (No. XXIV), is also described as being the god of love by his beauty. It seems possible that Khoṭṭiga was identical with Jagattuṅga, though we may not be sure of this, Khoṭṭiga was also known by the title *Amoghavarsha*.[123]

In Khoṭṭiga's reign the Rāshṭrakūṭa power suffered a serious reverse and virtually came to an end. The Paramāra king Harsha Sīyaka, who had sustained a reverse towards the close of the reign of Kṛishṇa III, now wreaked his vengeance. He is said to have taken in battle the wealth of king Khoṭṭiga.[124] A later Paramāra inscription[125] mentions a certain Kaṅkadeva who overthrew the array of the king of Karṇāṭa on the banks of the Narmadā and died a hero's death, exhausting the enemy forces in fighting on the side of king Śrī Harsha, the lord of Mālava. Lastly, Dhanapāla, who wrote his *Paiyalachchhī* in Dhārā in A.D. 972-73, says that in that year the king of Mālava plundered Mānyakheṭa.[126] The statement of Dhanapāla finds confirmation in the Śravaṇa Belgola epitaph[127] of Mārasiṁha II which says that by the strength of his arm he protected the camp of the emperor who had been forced to abandon Mānyakheṭa.[128]

It is not clear if the war was started by Khoṭṭiga or by Harsha himself, but its main incidents stand out prominently—a battle on the banks of Narmadā in which the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces sustained defeat, the dash of the Paramāra forces on the Rāshṭrakūṭa capital Mānyakheṭa which was abandoned by Khoṭṭiga and thoroughly sacked by his enemy, and the prevention of utter disaster by the defence being

120 *EI*, XXI, p. 260.
121 Karḍa plates (XXVIII).
122 Adragunchi Ins. A.D. 971-72, *IA*, XII, pp. 255-56.
123 *EI*, XVI, p. 284.
124 Udaipur Praśasti, *EI*, I, pp. 235-37.
125 Arthūṇa Inscription A.D. 1080, *EI*, XIV, p. 299, vv. 17-19.
126 *EI*, XIII, p. 179-80.
127 *EI*, V, p. 176, i. 12.
128 *Pace* Fleet (*EI*, V, p. 176, n. 5). I prefer *pravāsita* to *praveśita* in the phrase *bhuja-balaparipālita-Mānyakheṭa-pravāsita-chakravarti-Kaṭakasya*. The reading on the stone is clearly *sravāsita*.

organized by Mārasiṁha II, who enabled his overlord Khoṭṭiga to arrest the progress of the enemy and perhaps regain his hold on the capital after the retreat of the Paramāra forces. The empire was rudely shaken by this Paramāra inroad and the result was seen very soon after.

Mārasiṁha was the chief feudatory and friend of Khoṭṭiga, and several inscriptions[129] attest the importance of his position. His Adaragunchi inscription, A.D. 971-72, mentions his subordinate Pāñchāladeva, afterwards famous as the opponent of Chālukya Taila II, but at the time ruling over a small division Sebbe 30 under Mārasiṁha.

Khoṭṭiga died about the middle of A.D 972, and was succeeded by Karka II, son of Nirupama, the younger brother of Kṛishṇa III and Khoṭṭiga (No XXVIII). Karka had the titles *Amoghavarsha, Nutana-Pārtha, Ahitamārtaṇḍa, Vīra-Nārāyaṇa, Nṛipatuṇga, and Rājatriṇetra* (No. XXVIII). He is said to have mastered the entire science of polity even as a boy. Malkhed is mentioned as his permanent capital, and in a number of high-flown verses he is said to have conquered the Gurjaras, the Cholas, the Hūṇas and the Pāṇḍyas, doubtless conventional praise of no historical value. The Guṇḍūr inscription,[130] of his reign bears the date July A.D. 973 and mentions the Gaṅga Mārasiṁha as the ruler of Yeraḍaranūru, i.e. Belvola and Purigere, besides Pāñçhāladeva and some other feudatories. Very soon after, Karka was overthrown by Taila II, Chālukya. The Bhadana grant[131] (A.D. 997) of Aparājita states that the light of kings, Karka, was extinguished by the violent wind named Tailapa and the Raṭṭarājya ceased to exist. The Kharepatan plates,[132] dated A.D. 1008, state that Tailapa, the Chālukya, became king after defeating Karka in battle, and the much later Mangoli inscription[133] gives a more embellished account of what happened, summarised by Fleet in the following terms:

> 'And then prosperity returning to the Chalki family which had suffered mishap through being bruised by the race of the Demons in the shape of the Raṭṭa kings; Taila II, a very incarnation of Kṛishṇa, fought a hundred and eight battles out in the open country and captured 88 fortresses. None of the hostile kings could shake off this Āhavamalla Taila who, resembling Death, annihilated in war king Kakkara and king Ranakambha, the sun and moon in the Rāshṭrakūṭa sky, and amidst the applauses of the whole world

129 *SII*, XI, i, Nos. 41, 42 and 43.

130 *IA*, XII, p. 271.

131 *EI*, III, p. 272, lines 17 to 20.

132 *EI*, III, p. 372.

133 *EI*, V, p. 20. Also VI, additions and corrections to V. See also Sogal ins., *EI*, XVI, p. 1.

with an exceedingly great effort acquired the sovereignty of the land of Kuntala.'

The Chālukya Taila must have slowly built up his position and influence from the days of Kṛishṇa III, taking advantage of the increasing weakness of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire, and completed its overthrow when he found a suitable opportunity after the Paramāra invasion had shaken the empire to its foundations. Karka II and his ally, another Rāshṭrakūṭa prince named Raṇakhaṁbha, fell on the field of battle, and the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire ceased to exist. Mārasiṁha II tried to revive Rāshṭrakūṭa power by setting up Indra IV, the issue of a son of Kṛishṇa III by a sister of Mārasiṁha himself,[134] but the attempt met with no success. Mārasiṁha starved himself to death by *sallekhana* in A.D. 975. His feudatory Pāñchāladeva, who claims soon[135] after Mārasiṁha's death to have ruled the whole country south of the Kṛishṇā river, was also killed by Taila in battle; Indra IV also performed *sallekhana* some time later in A.D. 982.[136]

From the collapse of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi to the revival of Chālukya power under Taila II is a period of roughly two centuries, and during this long interval the line of Rāshṭrakūṭas, started by Dantidurga, continued to rule Western Deccan with conspicuous success. Their direct rule was confined to the area that is called 'Raṭṭapāḍi seven and a half lacs' in Tamil inscriptions long after they quitted the stage; but the weight of their arms was felt literally by the whole length of India from the Himālayas to the Cape Comorin. In the North the Pratīhāras and Pālas were defeated in wars by the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and the Paramāras became their vassals; in the South the Gaṅga country was a viceroyalty under them for many years and the rising empire of the Cholas suffered a severe curtailment for a time; in the eastern half of the Deccan, strenuous efforts were made repeatedly to bring the Chālukyas of Veṅgī under control. The daring pursuit of the glory in so many directions not only meant occasional failure even on the field in the midst of notable succesess, but strained the resources of government and gave rise to feudal conditions and the growth of mighty vassals who disturbed the peace of the realm and ultimately overthrew the suzerain power itself. But in spite of everything, the memorials of Rāshṭrakūṭa rule in art, architecture and literature claim an important place in the heritage of India. The administration of the empire won the admiration of foreign visitors by its justice and liberality, and by promoting industrial and com-

134 *EC*, II, No. 59.
135 *EI*, VI, p. 259.
136 *EC*, II, No. 52.

merce added to the wealth and happiness of the people. The history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas is indeed a bright chapter in the history of India.

LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

I Tivarkhed plate of Rāshṭrakūṭa Nannarāja, A.D. 631-32, *EI*, XI, p. 276.
II. Samangadh ins. of Dantidurga, A.D. 754, *IA*, XI, p. 111.
III. Antroli-Chharoli pl. of Karkarāja II of Gujrat, A.D. 757, *JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 106.
IV. Ellora Daśāvatara cave temple ins. of Rāshṭrakūṭa kings, *ASWI*, V, p. 92.
V. Telagaon pl. of Kṛishṇarāja I, A.D. 768, *EI*, XIII, p. 275.
VI. Bhandak pl. of Kṛishṇarāja I, A.D. 772, *EI*, XIV. p. 121.
VII. Dhulia pl. of Karkarāja Suvarṇavarsha, A.D. 779, *EI*, VIII, p. 182.
VIII. Maṇṇe ins. of Kambha, A.D. 802, *EC*, IX, Nl. 61.
IX. Radhanpur ins. of Govinda III, A.D. 808, *EI*, VI, p. 239.
X. Wani pl. of Govinda III, A.D. 808, *IA*, XI. p. 157.
XI. Torkhed pl. of Govinda III, A.D. 812-13, *EI*, III. p. 54.
XII. Baroda pl. of Karka II, A.D. 812-13, *IA*. XII, p. 158.
XIII. Nausari pl. of Karka II, A.D. 816, *JBBRAS*, XX, p. 131.
XIV. Surat pl. of Karka II, A.D. 821, *EI*, XXI, p. 140.
XV. Kavi pl. of Govindarāja of Gujrat, A.D. 827, *IA*, V, p. 145.
XVI. Baroda pl. of Amoghavarsha, A.D. 835, *IA*, XIV, p. 199.
XVII. Nilgund ins. of Amoghavarsha, A.D. 866, *EI*, VI, p. 98.
XVIII. Sirur ins. of Amoghavarsha, A.D. 866, *EI*, VII, p. 202.
XIX. Sañjan pl. of Amoghavarsha, A.D. 871, *EI*, XVIII, p. 243.
XX. Bagumra pl. of Kṛishṇa, A.D. 888, *IA*, XIII, p. 66.
XXI. Nausari pl. of Indra III, A.D. 915, *EI*, IX, p. 24.
XXII. Cambay pl. of Govinda IV, A.D. 930, *EI*, VII, p. 26.
XXIII. Sangli pl. of Govinda IV, A.D. 933, *IA*. XII, p. 249.
XXIV. Deoli pl. of Kṛishṇa III, A.D. 940, *EI*, V, p. 192.
XXV. Karhad pl. of Kṛishṇa III, A.D. 959. *EI*, IV, p. 278.
XXVI. Kolhapur pl. of Kṛishṇa III, A.D. 961, *JBBRAS*, New Series, X, p. 21.
XXVII. Jura *praśasti* of Kṛishṇa III, undated, *EI*, XIX, p. 287.
XXVIII. Karda pl. of Karkarāja II, A.D. 972, *IA*, XII, p. 264.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

MINOR STATES IN THE DECCAN

I. WESTERN DECCAN

(1) *The Bhoja Dynasty of the Goa Region*

ACCORDING TO Purāṇic traditions, the Bhojas were one of the five clans of the Haihaya people who were themselves a branch of the celebrated Yādavas. Although the original home of the Yādava tribe lay in the Mathurā region, there is evidence to show that its various branches migrated and settled in different parts of Western India and the Deccan. The Haihayas are associated with the city of Māhishmatī on the Narmadā. According to the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Bhoja was the title adopted by some South Indian kings. The Hāthīgumphā inscription of Khāravela, and possibly also the rock edicts of Aśoka, locate the Bhojas in the Deccan, while the Chammak plates of Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II place a territory called Bhoja-kaṭa near about the present Ellichpur district of Berār. The Bhojas of Goa may have been a branch of the Bhojas of Berār. In certain South Indian records, however the terms *bhojaka* is used in the sense of a *jāgirdār*. The history of such names of royal houses as Pratīhāra and Rāshṭrakūṭa, which were originally official designations, would suggest that the derivation of the name of the royal family in question from the designation *bhojaka* is not altogether unlikely. The *Mahābhārata* (1, 84, 22) seems to use the word *bhoja* in the sense of a ruler not entitled to use royal epithets.

Four copper-plate charters of the Bhoja kings of Goa have been so far discovered.[1] The first of these records has been assigned on palaeographical grounds to the sixth or seventh century A.D. It records the royal order issued to the officials of the Śivapura *vishaya* by the *Dharma-Mahārāja* Kāpāli-varman who belonged to the Bhoja dynasty. The charter, issued from the camp of Pāmāsa-kheṭaka, records the grant of a piece of land at Śivapuraka in favour of Svāmikarāya who was apparently a feudatory of the Bhoja king. Svāmikarāya, in his turn, granted the land to a Brāhmaṇa named Bhavārya. Śiva-

1 Cf. *Summary of Papers*, AIOC, Bombay, 1949, p. 99.

puraka is no doubt the same as Śivapura mentioned in the inscription of Chandra-varman to be discussed below.

Two other rulers of the Bhoja family, *viz* Prithivīmalla-varman and Anirjita-varman, are known from their records. Two copper-plate grants of the former and one of the latter have so far been discovered. The first of the two charters of Prithivīmalla-varman was issued from Vaishabhinī-kheṭa and the second from Prithivī-parvata, apparently named after the king. Both the kings appear to have flourished in the seventh century A.D.

P. B. Desai discovered a charter of another Bhoja king named Aśaṁkita from Harigutti in the Aṅkola *tāluk* of the North Kanara district. The record may be palaeographically assigned to the sixth or seventh century; but whether Aśaṁkita ruled earlier or later than Kāpāli-varman cannot be determined. King Aśaṁkita is said to have granted the village of Sundarikā in the Dīpaka *vishaya* in favour of a Buddhist monastery at the request of his feudatory Koṭṭipeggili of the Kaikeya family of Nandipalli. Whether this Kaikeya chief was related to the Kekaya ruler Sivananda-varman of the Aṇaji stone inscription[2] is difficult to decide in the present state of our knowledge. The Buddhist monastery is described as *sva* (i.e. his or their own); but whether this refers to the Bhoja king or his Kekaya feudatory, or to both of them, cannot be determined. The seal of the Harigutti record bears the emblem of an elephant.

A king named Devarāja issued his Siroda grant[3] from the city of Chandrapura in the twelfth year of his reign. The king was believed formerly to have belonged to the family of the Gomins. But according to the new reading of a passage of the inscription suggested by N. L. Rao, king Devarāja was also a member of the Bhoja family. Chandrapura, the capital of this ruler, has been identified with modern Chandor in Goa. The palaeography of the Siroda grant suggests that Devarāja ruled about the end of the fourth century A.D. He is therefore the earliest known member of the Bhoja family of the Goa region. It seems that this region was in earlier times under the political influence of the kings of the Kuntala country. Devarāja's seal is said to bear the emblem of a swan, although it may actually be an elephant as on Aśamkita's seal.

Another king of the same region was *Mahārāja* Chandra-varman of the Goa Grant[4] issued in the second year of his reign. A palaeographical consideration of this record would suggest that the king flou-

2 Cf. *Suc. Sat.*, pp. 313 ff.
3 *EI*, XXIV, pp. 143 ff.
4 *ABORI*, XXIII, pp. 510-14.

rished some time in the fifth century. King Chandra-varman is known to have granted a piece of land in favour of a Buddhist monastery located at Śivapura which was probably situated in Goa. The damaged condition of the Goa grant of Chandra-varman renders it difficult to determine whether he belonged to the dynasty of the Bhojas. But his seal is supposed to bear the figure of a boar. It is however possible that the emblem on the seal of king Chandra-varman is also actually a lion.

(2) *The Chālukya Dynasty (No. 1) of Southern Lāṭa*

Southern Lāṭa, as noted above (p. 150), was ruled by the Traikūṭaka dynasty in the fifth century A.D., but nothing is known about its history in the next century. A Chālukya dynasty is found to have been ruling there in the first half of the seventh century A.D. We learn from an inscription found at Kaira that there was a ruler named Jayasiṁha-mahārāja, whose son was Buddhavarmarāja. Whether this Jayasimha is identical with Jayasiṁha, the younger brother of Pulakeśin II of Bādāmi, cannot be definitely determined. Buddhavarmarāja's son was Vijayarāja, who issued this inscription from the camp of Vijayapura in A.D. 643. It records that the king granted the village of Pariyava to a religious institution of Jambusara. The village granted is identified with Pariya in the Olpad *tāluk* of the Surat district. Jambusara (modern Jambusar in Broach district), however, might not have been situated in the kingdom of Vijayarāja, for about this time this region was under the sway of a different dynasty. It is not unlikely that this branch of the Chālukya dynasty was subordinate to the Chālukyas of Bādāmi.

(3) *Sendrakas of Southern Lāṭa*

In the middle of the seventh century a Sendraka family ruled in the Surat district, south of the Tapti. An inscription, found at Bagumra, Balesar district, in the (old) Gaikwad's territory, gives the following genealogy of the royal family of the Sendrakas:

Bhānuśakti
Ādityaśakti
Prithivīvallabha
Nīkumbhallaśakti. (or Nikumbha *alias* Āllaśakti)

Nikumbhallasákti (or Nikumbha-Āllasákti) granted the village of Balisa, in the *vishaya* included in the Treyann-Āhāra, in A.D. 655, to a Brāhmaṇa. Treyanna is modern Ten, near Bardoli, Surat district, and Balisa is Wanesa, south-east of Ten. The Sendrakas were supplanted by a Chālukya family in southern Lāṭa.

(4) *The Chālukya Dynasty (No. 2) of Southern Lāṭa*

Reference has been made above (p. 426) to the two sons of the Chālukya king Pulakeśin II (A.D. 609-42), Vikramāditya I and Dharāśraya Jayasiṁha-varman. Jayasimha-varman's power is stated to have been increased by his elder brother Vikramāditya I. This seems to imply that he was appointed to govern a province, presumably Southern Lāṭa. Jayasiṁha had three sons, Maṅgalarāja, Sryāśraya Śīlāditya *yuvarāja,* and Pulakeśin. Śīlāditya, who succeeded his father, issued two grants in A.D. 670 and 692. Śīlāditya was succeeded by his elder brother Jayāśraya Maṅgalarāja, who was also known as Vinayāditya and Yuddhamalla. Maṅgalarāja issued a grant from Maṅgalapuri in A.D. 731. He was succeeded by his youngest brother Pulakeśin Avanijanāśraya. An inscription of Pulakeśin, dated A.D. 739, states that the king received the titles of 'solid pillar of Dakshiṇāpatha' and 'repeller of the unrepellable' (*anivartaka-nivartayitṛi*) and two more from the king Śrīvallabha 'for repulsing a Tājika (Arab) army which, after destroying the Saindhava, Kachchella, Surāshṭra, Chāvoṭaka, Maurya, and Gurjjara kings, and wishing to penetrate the Dakshiṇāpatha, came to reduce the Navasārikā country'. This expedition was obviously led by the officers of Junaid who, according to Balādhurī, invaded Barwas and Malibah. Although details are lacking, we can easily infer that this bare mention of the Arab incursion refers to a memorable episode in the history of India. The epithet 'repeller of the unrepellable' conveys an idea of the great consternation caused by the onrush of the Arabs whom none could withstand. Kingdom after kingdom in Rajasthan fell before them like houses of cards till they advanced to Mālava (Malibah) in the east and Broach (Barwas) in the south. As will be noted later (Ch. XIX), they were checked by Pratīhāra Nāgabhaṭa in Mālava, and Pulakeśin was the hero of the south. He is entitled to the highest credit, and fully deserves the titles conferred by the king for protecting the Deccan from the incursion of the Arabs. This great achievement is the last thing that we know of this family. The Rāshṭrakūṭas took possession of this part of Lāṭa in the second half of the eighth century A.D.

II. CENTRAL DECCAN

(1) *The Rāshṭrakūṭas of Berar*

Four kings of a family of Rāshṭrakūṭas are known from the Tivarkhed and Multai copper-plate records of Nannarāja-Yuddhāsura, discovered in the Betul district of Berar. The Tivarkhed charter was issued from the city of Achalapura, which is the same as modern Ellichpur in the Amraoti district, and may have been the capital of these

Rāshṭrakūṭas. Another grant was issued by the same king from the city of Padmanagara, which has not been quite satisfactorily identified but seems to have been a secondary capital of the family.

Nannarāja-Yuddhāsura is described as the son of Svāmikarāja, the grandson of Govindarāja, and the great-grandson of Durgarāja. They are said to have belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭa lineage, although their relation with the other Rāshṭrakūṭa houses cannot be determined. Since, however, the name of the family was apparently derived from the official designation *Rāshṭrakūṭa,* i.e. ruler of a *Rāshṭra,* it is difficult to believe that all the various Rāshṭrakūṭas were actually blood relations.

The date of the Multai inscription of Nannarāja-Yuddhāsura is Śaka 631 (A.D. 709) expressed in words. The language of the date portion of the Tivarkhed inscription is defective; it has, however, been so amended as to indicate Śaka 553 (A.D. 631). But the Śaka year intended may be actually 653 corresponding to A.D. 731. The Padmanagara grant is dated in the Śaka year 615, i.e. A.D. 693. Thus Nannarāja seems to have flourished roughly about the period A.D. 690-735, and the rule of Durgarāja, Govindarāja, and Svāmikarāja may be roughly assigned respectively to the second, third, and fourth quarters of the seventh century. It is interesting to note that Danti-varman I, progenitor of the imperial line of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, appears to have ruled about the middle of the seventh century and to have been a contemporary of Durgarāja, great-grandfather of Nannarāja. It is likely, therefore, that both of them were appointed Rāshṭrakūṭas, or provincial governors by Pulakeśin II of the Chālukya house of Bādāmi—Durgarāja in Berar, and Danti-varman I probably in the Ellora region. Both these houses of the Rāshṭrakūṭas appear to have become powerful during the weak rule of the later members of the Chālukya house in the first half of the eighth century. It may be further suggested that the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Berar were subdued by Dantidurga or Danti-varman II, who was a descendant of Danti-varman I, and established Rāshṭrakūṭa sovereignty in the Deccan by overthrowing the Chālukyas of Bādāmi shortly after A.D. 742, as noted above, in Chapter XVI.

(2) *The Somavaṁśīs*

The family of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs, who ruled in South Kosala from their capital at Śrīpura at least up to the seventh century (above p. 157), was also known as the family of the Moon (*Soma-vaṁśa*). The rulers of this family claimed to have been lords of Kosala; but with the exception of only one record of one of the latest members of the

family, their inscriptions have been found in the western part of the ancient *janapada* of South Kosala which roughly corresponded to the modern Raipur-Bilaspur region of the Madhya Pradesh and the Sambalpur area of Orissa. The history of this family is obscure after Śivagupta (or Mahā-Śivagupta) Bālārjuna, who seems to have been defeated by Pulakeśin II some time before A.D. 634. Another group of rulers, claiming descent from the Somavaṁśa or the family of the Moon and also suzerainty over South Kosala, is known to have ruled over the eastern part of the *janapada* from the tenth century. Some of these kings bore such names as Śivagupta and Mahāśivagupta, and the name of one of them ended with the word *kesarin*, as in the case of one of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśī kings. But these kings never claimed any connection with the Pāṇḍuvaṁśa, and used the distinctive epithet 'lord of Trikaliṅga'. The emblem on their seal was the Gajalakshmī and not the Garuḍa of the earlier dynasty. The relation of the Somavaṁśīs with the earlier ruling families of South Kosala, including that of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs, cannot be determined satisfactorily in the present state of our knowledge.

The earliest known member of the Somavaṁśa was Śivagupta. He is endowed with imperial titles in the records of his son who was the real founder of the family's greatness. The reign of Śivagupta may be roughly assigned to the first half of the tenth century. It has been suggested that the city of Pāli, identified with the village Pāli, 12 miles to the north-east of Ratanpur in the Bilāspur district, was possibly conquered by the Kalachuri king Mugdhatuṅga of Tripurī (near Jabbalpur) from the Somavaṁśī ruler Śivagupta. There is, however, no evidence of Somavaṁśī rule over the western part of the ancient *janapada* of South Kosala. If they were actually in occupation of the Raipur-Bilāspur region, they must have been soon ousted from that area by the Kalachuris, although permanent Kalachuri occupation of Chattisgarh did not materialise earlier than the eleventh century.

Śivagupta's successor was his son Janamejaya, surnamed Mahābhavagupta I, who issued his charters from Suvarṇapura, Mūrasīman and Ārāma. Suvarṇapura, no doubt the present Sonpur, till recently the chief town of a State of that name in northern Orissa, was the principal capital of the king. Mūrasīman, possibly modern Mursinga in Paṭna area, was a secondary capital, while Ārāma is supposed to have been a royal pleasure-garden near Suvarṇapura. Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta was a worshipper of Śiva. He is described as 'lord of Kosala' and is known to have granted lands in that country. The specific mention of Kosala as the country in which the donated lands were situated seems to suggest that the king's dominions comprised territories other than Kosala. The king, like other members of his

family, claims to have been the lord of Trikaliṅga. Whether this indicated a combination of three countries including Kaliṅga, or a particular tract of land between Kaliṅga and South Kosala, cannot be easily determined, although the name was probably used both in a wide and a narrow sense. In a later inscription of the family Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta I is credited with defeating and killing the king of Oḍra or Orissa. But whether he was able to annex Orissa to his kingdom is not definitely known. The king seems to have flourished about the middle of the tenth century, and may have been the Kosala king who came into conflict with the Kalachuri monarch Lakshmaṇarāja (about the third quarter of the tenth century).

Janamejaya's minister for war and peace was Malladatta, son of Dhāradatta, who served him at least down to his thirty-first regnal year, and was succeeded in the office of minister by a second Dhāradatta, probably a son of Malladatta. This hereditary succession to ministerial offices was an interesting feature of ancient Indian administration, and solves a number of problems in regard to the genealogy of the Somavaṁśīs.

Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta I ruled at least up to his thirty-fourth regnal year, and was succeeded by his son Yayāti, otherwise called Mahāśivagupta I. From this time the titles *Mahābhavagupta* and *Mahāśivagupta* appear to have been alternately adopted by the rulers of this family. The earlier records of Yayāti Mahāśivagupta I were issued from Vinītapura which is probably the modern Binka in the 'Sonpur State'. His latest records were, however, issued from Yayātinagara on the Mahānadī which was apparently a city founded by, and named after, the king. It has been suggested that the city of Vinītapura was renamed Yayātinagara by Yayāti Mahāśivagupta I. The king was a devotee of Śiva like his father. The lands granted by him are also often specifically stated to have belonged to the Kosala or South Kosala country. An official of the king is once mentioned as associated with Kosaladeśa.

Yayāti Mahāśivagupta I ruled at least up to his twenty-eighth regnal year. In some of his later inscriptions he is credited with a victory over a king named Ajapāla who cannot be identified. Dhāradatta II, who served Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta I in the latest years of his reign, continued in the office of minister of war and peace during the reign of Yayāti Mahāśivagupta I. Later, the minister was succeeded in his office by another member of his family named Siṁhadatta who seems to have been a son of Harshadatta and a grandson of Dhāradatta II.

The reign of Yayāti Mahāśivagupta seems to have ended in the

beginning of the eleventh century. The later history of the family will be treated in the next volume.

III. ORISSA

(1) *The Bhauma-Karas*

About A.D. 643, king Harsha-vardhana led an expedition against the kingdom of Koṅgoda, in the eastern part of the Ganjam district, apparently through West Bengal and Orissa which were the territories of the subdued king of Gauḍa. The reason for the expedition was probably the assertion of independence by the Śailodbhavas of Koṅgoda and the neighbouring local powers of Orissa, all of whom owed allegiance to king Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa in the first quarter of the seventh century. Harsha seems to have made an attempt to recover the lost dependencies of Gauḍa in Orissa on behalf of the Gauḍa king who was now his subordinate ally. Utkala, or eastern Orissa, which was under the feūdatory house of the Dattas during Śaśāṅka's time, was temporarily subdued by Harsha, and he seems to have recognized a Buddhist royal family as his subordinate in the Utkala or Toṣalī country. This was the family of the kings who appear to have used the Harsha era of A.D. 606 and called themselves Bhauma in the earlier records and Kara in the later epigraphs. Whether the word Bhauma indicated their aboriginal origin or their relation with the the Bhauma kings of Kāmarūpa (who were however not Buddhists) cannot be determined. The capital of the Bhauma-Karas was the city of Guheśvarapāṭaka which may have been the same as Virajas mentioned as the residence of an early king of the family. Virajas, otherwise called Viraja or Virajā, is to be identified with modern Jājpur in the Cuttack district.

The founder of the Bhauma-Kara family was a chief named Kshemaṅkara or Lakshmīkara who was a *paramopāsaka*, i.e. a Buddhist. His son and successor was *Mahārāja* Śivakara I whose other names or titles are known to have been Unmattasiṁha (or °kesarin) and Bharasaha. His queen was Jayāvalī who seems to have been the daughter of the ruler of Rāḍha and to have been wedded according to the Rākshasa form of marriage. Rāḍha was the name of the modern Burdwan division in the heart of the kingdom of Gauḍa. Whether Jayāvalī belonged to the royal house of Gauḍa or to a viceregal house cannot be determined with certainty. King Śivakara I was a *parama-tathāgata* (i.e. a Buddhist) and was probably a contemporary of Harsha-vardhana. This date of the king seems to be supported by the Ganjam grant which suggests that Unmattakesarin (Śivakara I), stationed at Virajas, conquered parts of Koṅgoda-maṇḍala from Gaṅga

Jaya-varman of Śvetaka with the help of his feudatory, Rāṇaka Vishavārṇava, some time after the Gaṅga year 120 (A.D. 616-18). The charter, originally issued by Jaya-varman, was reissued by Vishavārṇava with the permission of Unmaṭṭakesarin. It may be pointed out in this connection that one of the Parlakimedi grants of Jaya-varman seems to be the copy of a genuine record of the sixth or seventh century to which period the original records of this Gaṅga king are assigned on palaeographical grounds, and that the Parlakimedi grant referred to is dated in the year 100 of the Gaṅga era corresponding to a date in A.D. 596-98.[5]

Śivakara I (Unmaṭṭasiṁha-Bharasaha) was succeeded by his son Śubhākara I who was a *parama-saugata* (i.e. a Buddhist). Although he calls himself a *mahārāja* in his Neulpur grant, he is credited with full imperial titles in his son's record. It is probable that Śubhākara I assumed independence after Harsha-vardhana's death. The date of his charter is uncertain; but his rule may be roughly assigned to the third quarter of the seventh century. He was the lord of the Utkala country and granted lands in Uttara-Tosalī (i.e. the Balasore district and the adjoining areas of the Cuttack district). This evidently shows that Tosalī was either another name of Utkala or the name of a part of that country. Śubhākara I is also said to have subdued the Kaliṅga people. This may point to his hostile relations with the Gaṅgas. He married Mādhavadevī who became the mother of the *Mahārājādhirājas* Śivakara II and Śāntikara I. King Śāntikara I, who was also known as Lalitahāra (or °bhāra) I and Gavāḍa I, may have been the founder of Gavāḍapura mentioned in a later record of the family. The Dhauli inscription of his reign is dated in the year 93 (A.D. 699). Śāntikara I married Tribhuvanamahādevī of the Nāga family, who is described as a *parama-vaishṇavī* and as the daughter of Rājamalla of the southern country. Unfortunately no satisfactory identification of this Nāga chief of the south is possible in the present state of our knowledge.

According to a copper-plate inscription, Śāntikara I was succeeded by Subhākara II who was the son of Śivakara II by queen Mohinīdevī of the Bhavāna family. The charter is dated in the year 100 and was made by Śubhākara II at the request of the queen Nriṇṇādevī.

The next occupant of the Bhauma-Kara throne was Śubhākara III who was otherwise called Kusumahāra (°bhāra) or Siṁhadhvaja (°ketu), and was the son of Śāntikara I and queen Tribhuvanamahādevī. He granted lands in both Uttara and Dakshiṇa Tosalī in the year

5 *JKHRS*, II, p. 103.

103 (A.D. 709). The grant of land in Northern Tosalī was made at the request of a feudatory named Pulindarāja in favour of the god Vaidyanāthabhaṭṭāraka (Śiva) enshrined at the Pulindeśvara temple. The land granted in South Tosalī was actually situated in Koṅgodamaṇḍala-*vishaya*, and this fact apparently points to the success of the Bhauma-Karas against the Śailodbhavas. This king probably died after a very short reign as he was succeeded first by his mother Tribhuvanamahādevī (also called Siddhagaurī) and then by his young son Śāntikara II. Tribhuvanamahādevī is said to have been requested by the feudatories to assume the reins of government in the same way as an ancient queen named Gosvāminī had done. A date in Tribhuvanamahādevī's reign falls in the year 110 (A.D. 716) or 120 (A.D. 726).

Śāntikara II, who succeeded his grandmother Tribhuvanamahādevī, was also known as Loṇabhāra (or Lavaṇa°) I and Gayāḍa II. He married Hīrāmahādevī, daughter of Siṁhamāna, and had by her two sons named Śubhākara IV (surnamed Kusumahāra or °bhāra II) and Śivakara III (surnamed Lalitahāra or °bhāra II) both of whom became kings. By this time, the Bhauma-Karas were no longer adherents of the Buddhist faith. *Mahārājādhirāja* Śubhakara IV calls himself a *paramamāheśvara*, i.e. devout worshipper of Śiva, in his Talcher grant dated in the year 141 (A.D. 747). His younger brother Śivakara III, who succeeded him, is known from his records dated in the year 149 (A.D. 755). Śivakara III was followed on the throne successively by his two sons, viz Śāntikara III who married Dharmamahādevī and was also known as Lavaṇabhāra or Loṇabhāra II, and Śubhākara V who married Gaurī and Vakulamahādevī. Both of these probably died without leaving any male issue, and, after the death of Śubhākara V, the throne passed on to his queen Gaurī who was herself succeeded by her daughter, the *Paramamāheśvarī* Daṇḍimahādevī. The known dates of *Paramabhaṭṭārikā Mahārājādhirāja-Parameśvarī* Daṇḍimahādevī are the years 180 (A.D. 786) and 187 (A.D. 793). A recently discovered charter of the queen gives the date as the year 280 which, however, seems to be a mistake for 180. Daṇḍimahādevī retained the hold of the Bhauma-Karas on Koṅgodamaṇḍala. She was succeeded by her step-mother Vakulamahādevī who was the daughter of a ruler of the Bhañja family that seems to have owed allegiance to the Bhauma-Karas. The throne next passed on to Dharmamahādevī, who was the widow of Daṇḍimahādevī's paternal uncle Śāntikara III (Lavaṇabhāra II). The end of the dynasty is wrapped in obscurity. But it seems that the decline of the Bhauma-Karas was brought about by the rise of their feudatories such as the Bhañjas, Śulkis, Tuṅgas, and Dhavalas who gradually began to rule almost independently.

There is some difficulty in reconciling the chronology of the

Bhauma-Karas suggested above with an event recorded in Chinese historical literature. In A.D. 795 the Chinese emperor Te-tsong received as a token of homage an autographed manuscript addressed to him by the king of Wu-cha (i.e. Oḍra or Orissa) in Southern India, who was a follower of Mahāyāna Buddhism and whose name, translated into Chinese, was 'the fortunate monarch who does what is pure, the lion'. The original form of the name is supposed to be Śrī-Śubhakara-devakesarin (°siṁha) who is usually identified with Śubhākara I of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty. But the names Śubhakara and Śubhākara are not exactly the same in meaning, and a word indicating 'lion' is conspicuous by its absence from this name. It has to be admitted that both these difficulties are partially removed if the king mentioned in the Chinese source is identified with Śivakara I Unmaṭṭasiṁha, father of Śubhākara I. But even in this case, the name Śivakara does not exactly mean 'who does what is pure' and *unmaṭṭasiṁha* actually means 'a furious lion' (*unmaṭṭa* being a Prākrit corruption of Sanskrit *unmatta*) and not merely 'a lion'. If these difficulties can be explained away as being due to some confusion on the part of the Chinese writers, Śivakara I Unmaṭṭasiṁha, the second king of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty, may be assigned to the last quarter of the eighth century. In that case we have to suggest that the era used in the records of the family started from the regnal reckoning of Kshemaṅkara or Lakshmīkara, founder of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty; and that the dynasty, which ruled for about two centuries, flourished between the middle of the eighth and that of the tenth century, and not between the beginning of the seventh and that of the ninth century, as suggested by our chronology. If, however, our chronology of the Bhauma-Karas may be supported, one has to suggest that the Buddhist king of Orissa mentioned in the Chinese source was the founder of a different ruling family who carved out a principality in Orissa at the expense of the Bhauma-Karas about the last decade of the eighth century when the latter were already on the decline. Whatever that may be, there is little doubt that at least the earlier sculptures at the Buddhist sites of the Naltigiri, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, and Kendrapara regions of Orissa belong to the age of the Karas. A writer has assigned a crowned Buddha of this group 'to the early eighth century A.D'.[6] This dating supports our chronology.

(2) *The Bhañjas*

There were several branches of the Bhañjas who originally owed allegiance to the Bhauma-Karas but began to rule almost indepen-

6 *Bulletin of the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery*, V, Parts I-II, p. 9.

dently after the latter's decline. Their history may be discussed under the following heads: (1) the Ādi-Bhañjas of Khijjiṅga-koṭṭa; (2-3) the Early and Later Bhañjas of Khiñjali-maṇḍala; and (4) the Bhañjas of Baud. Of these only the Ādi-Bhañjas and the earlier members of the Early Bhañja family of Khiñjali-maṇḍala flourished before the beginning of the eleventh century and may be treated here. The later members of the Early Bhañja dynasty of Khiñjali-maṇḍala as well as the Later Bhañjas of Khiñjali-maṇḍala and the Bhañjas of Baud would be discussed in the next volume.

It is difficult to determine the relation of these Bhañja families with an early king named Neṭṭabhañja known from his Baud copper-plate inscription.[7] This king, not described as belonging to the Bhañja family, apparently ruled in the eighth century as an independent monarch. The date of the charters, which was issued from Nav-Āṅgulaka (i.e. modern Angul in the Cuttack district) is the year 15 of the king's reign. Another copper-plate grant of the same king was found at or near Russellkonḍda in the Ganjam district. The charter was issued from Vārāḍḍā, probably in the same region. Thus the kingdom of Neṭṭabhañja seems to have included the Cuttack and Puri districts with parts of Ganjam. His rise appears to have synchronized with the decline of the Śailodbhavas of Eastern Ganjam. The most interesting information supplied by the Russellkoṇḍa plates of Neṭṭabhañja is that the king was a scion of the family of Drumrāja, a name as yet unknown from any other source. Another important fact recorded in the inscription is that Neṭṭabhañja represented the hundredth generation of the old royal family.

(a) *The Ādi-Bhañjas of Khijjiṅga-koṭṭa*

The inscriptions of the family styled Ādi-Bhañja have been discovered in Mayūrbhañj in Orissa and its neighbourhood. Khijjiṅga-koṭṭa, named after a *koṭṭa* or fort which was the residence of the kings of this family, has been identified with modern Khiching, the ancient capital of the old 'Mayūrbhañj State'. Indeed, the name of the State seems to have been derived from the Ādi-Bhañjas, as the progenitor of the family is said to have come out of a *mayūrāṇḍa* (pea-hen's egg) at a place called Koṭṭāśrama, and may have been actually called Mayūrabhañja with reference to his birth. He is said to have been nurtured by the sage Vaśishṭha.

The records of the family usually begin with an account of the birth of Vīrabhadra, the mythical progenitor of the family. A hero named Koṭṭabhañja was born in Vīrabhadra's family, styled Ādi-

7 *JBORS*, XVII, pp. 104 ff.

Bhañja. It may be suggested that Ādi-bhañja was another name of the mythical Vīrabhadra. It thus seems that Koṭṭabhañja was the real founder of the family, although little is known about his exploits. His other names appear to have been Vibhramatuṅga and Durjayabhañja.

Koṭṭabhañja had two sons, viz Narendrabhañja and Raṇabhañja, both of whom became kings.[8] Two inscriptions of Narendrabhañja have so far been discovered, each ending with a small record of the king's younger brother and successor Raṇabhañja. One of these subjoined records of Raṇabhañja is dated in the year 293 of an unspecified era. Another charter of Raṇabhañja, found at Jamdapir in the Bamanghati division of Mayūrbhañj, is dated in the year 288, evidently of the same era. There is little doubt that this era is the same as that used in the inscriptions of the Bhauma-Karas to whom the Bhañjas appear to have originally owed allegiance. As already pointed out above (p. 492) this era is either identical with the Harsha era of A.D. 606 or an independent Bhauma-Kara era starting from a date about A.D. 750. Raṇabhañja's date, 288-93, thus falls in the period A.D. 894-99 or A.D. 1038-43. The second of the two suggestions is rather doubtful, because the dates of the Bhañja records are expressed in symbols instead of figures, and this old system of writing dates is not known to have been continued after the tenth century. Of course it may be conjectured that the symbol for 200 in these dates was actually meant for 100 as in the case of a record of Daṇḍimahādevī referred to above (p. 494). In that case Raṇabhañja's rule may be assigned to the middle of the tenth century.

We have inscriptions of no less than four Ādi-Bhañja kings, each of whom describes himself as the son of Raṇabhañja. As at least three of these rulers claim to have had their residence at Khijjiṅga-koṭṭa, they appear to have ruled the Mayūrbhañj region one after another, although the order of their succession is unknown. These three sons of Raṇabhañja were Rājabhañja of the Jamdapir (Bamanghati) plate (No. 2), Pṛithvībhañja of the Ādipur plate, and the issuer of the unpublished Khiching plate whose name is given on the seal as Māhidabhañja and in the record proper as Mahanmadāhavabhañja. Rājabhañja is often erroneously taken to be a brother of Raṇabhañja. This is due to wrong reading and unsound interpretation of his record. In the Khandadeuli plate, issued by Pṛithvībhañja's son Narendrabhañja, Pṛithvibhañja seems to be described as an *aupāyika* (adopted) son of Raṇabhañja. The name of Mahanmadāhavabhañja, which reminds us of the Arabic name Muhammad, may be actually a compound of the Sanskrit words *mahat, mada,* and *āhava.*

8 Cf. *EI.* XXV, pp. 147 ff.

Another son of Raṇabhañja was Śatrubhañja who issued the Kesari plate. He is, however, not stated to have resided at Khijjiṅga-koṭṭa and may have ruled over a part of the kingdom side by side with one or more of his brothers. Śatrubhañja's queen Anakahdevī and his son *yuvarāja* Narendrabhañja are mentioned in his inscription. It is, however, not known if this *yuvarāja* ever ascended the Ādi-Bhañja throne.

Another king of the same family seems to be Durjayabhañja of the Adipur plate (No. 2) who is described as the son of Vibhramatuṅga and grandson of Raṇabhañja. It is difficult to determine, in the present state of our knowledge, which of the sons of Raṇabhañja had the *biruda* Vibhramatuṅga; it was possibly another name of Śatrubhañja of the Kesari plate. The Ādipur plate (No. 2) speaks of Durjayabhañja's queen Chīhīpa-mahādevī and his son *yuvarāja* Koṭṭabhañja; it is not known if the *yuvarāja* succeeded his father on the throne.

(b) *Earlier Members of the Early Bhañja Family of Khiñjali-maṇḍala*

Khiñjali-maṇḍala appears to have been the ancient name of the district round the old 'Keonjhar State' in Orissa. The earlier inscriptions of its ruling family have been discovered from Sonpur, Daspalla and Baud. The *maṇḍala* or division may have originally formed a part of an independent kingdom which cannot be identified, but it is found under a semi-independent branch of the Bhañja family from the beginning of the tenth century. The relation of these Bhañjas with the other known branches of the dynasty cannot be determined.

The founder of the Early Bhañja family of Khiñjali-maṇḍala was one Śilābhañja I Aṅgaḍḍi. In some records[9] of his son, he is represented as the son of Mallagaṁbhīra and grandson of Yathāsukha, but nothing is known about these earlier members of the family. It is interesting, however, to note that their names have no *bhañja* ending which may have been first claimed by Śilābhañja I. Śilābhañja I Aṅgaḍḍi was succeeded by his son Śatrubhañja, otherwise called Gandhaṭa. The king seems to have been the founder of the city of Gandhaṭapāṭi which is the modern Gandharavāḍi in Baud. He issued his charters from the city of Dhṛitipura which appears to have been the early capital of this family of rulers, but has not yet been identified. Śatrubhañja-Gandhaṭa is described as having belonged to the Aṇḍaja or 'egg-born' family, and this suggests that he had relation with the Ādi-Bhañjas claiming descent from a mythical hero born of a pea-hen's egg. He is also said to have been the lord of both the Khiñjali-maṇḍalas, showing that the original Khiñjali-maṇḍala was divided into two halves that had been for some time under

9 Cf. *JBORS*, XVIII, pp. 387 ff.

different princes. Śatrubhañja claims to have been a devout worshipper of Vishṇu. He ruled at least up to his fifteenth regnal year[10] and was succeeded by his son Raṇabhañja, often called *Rāṇaka* and *Mahāsāmanta*. His epithet, 'one who acquired the five great sounds', also points to his essential feudatory character. It is, however, not easy to determine who claimed his allegiance, real or nominal. Like his father he had his headquarters at the city of Dhṛitipura. In his earlier records, Raṇabhañja is described as a worshipper of Vishṇu, and also as having obtained boons from the goddess Stambheśvarī. The word *stambha* seems to be used in the sense of a *śiva-liṅga*, and the goddess was probably represented on a *liṅga*. Such *liṅgas*, with the representation of the mother-goddess regarded as the energizing power of Śiva, have been discovered in Eastern India. This devotion to Śakti probably led to the king's conversion to Śaivism in the later years of his life. In an inscription of the fifty-fourth year of Raṇabhañja's reign, the king is described as a devout worshipper of Maheśvara.

There is a clue to determine the period when Raṇabhañja, the ruler of Ubhaya-Khiñjalimaṇḍala, flourished. The donor of the Patna Museum grant of the time of this king was Mahādevī Vijyā who was very probably one of his queens. The queen is described in the record as the daughter of Rāṇaka Niyārṇama. This Niyārṇama seems to be no other than the Kadamba Rāṇaka Niyārṇava of Jayantyāpura, who was the father of Bhīmakheḍi and grandfather of Dharmakheḍi. As Kadamba Dharmakheḍi is known to have issued the Santabommali plates dated in the Gaṅga year 520 (A.D. 1016) and the Maṇdasa plates of Śaka 917 (A.D. 995), his grandfather Niyarṇava or Niyārṇama seems to have flourished about the middle of the tenth century. The reign of Raṇabhañja, son-in-law of Niyārṇava or Niyārṇama, may thus be roughly assigned to the third quarter of that century. Raṇabhañja's grandfather Śilābhañja-Āṅgaḍḍi and his father Śatrubhañja-Gandhaṭa appear to have flourished respectively about the first and second quarters of the tenth century.

Raṇabhañja was succeeded by his son Neṭṭabhañja, surnamed Kalyāṇakalaśa. He seems to have transferred the capital from Dhṛitipura to a new city called Vañjulvaka whence his charters were issued. This city cannot be satisfactorily identified; but the fact that his records have been discovered in the Ganjam district seems to show that the family was driven towards the south, under circumstances that cannot be determined at present. Neṭṭabhañja was a worshipper of Maheśvara, and his rule may be assigned roughly to the last quar-

10 Cf. *JBORS*, II, pp. 429 ff. The date of the Tekkali plates (*ibid.*, XVIII, pp. 387 ff.) of the same king is clearly the regnal year 14.

ter of the tenth century. The history of his successors will be treated in the next volume.

(3) *The Dhavalas*

A single copper-plate grant reveals the existence of a king named Narendra-dhavala. The plate is known to have been secured from the Collector of Ganjam.[11] Unfortunately, it was not noticed by earlier writers that the first line of the record contains the interesting passage *Khiṇḍarasighemṁ* (*śṛiṅge*) *śrī-Narendradhavala-rājye Gomuṇḍa-maṇḍale*. It is a *kraya-śāsana* recording the sale of a village called Taḍesaragrāma which was apparently situated in Khindaraśṛiṅga within Gomuṇḍa-maṇḍala. The district called Gomuṇḍa-maṇḍala formed a part or more probably the whole of the dominions of the king named Narendra-dhavala. The village is said to have been originally purchased from Śilābhañja.

King Narendra-dhavala is not known from any other sources. But it seems that his territory lay near the Khiṅjali-maṇḍala which constituted the dominions of a branch of the Bhañja dynasty to which Śilābhanja mentioned in the record belonged. The reference to Śilābhañja gives an interesting clue as to the time when Narendra-dhavala flourished. There were two Śilābhañjas in the Early Bhañja family of Khiṅjali-maṇḍala. But there is definite evidence to show that Śilābhañja mentioned in our record is no other than Śilābhañja I surnamed Gandhaṭa. The inscription in question was engraved by Padmanābha, son of the *Vanik* Pāṇḍi, and there is hardly any doubt that the same person is mentioned in the Sonpur plates[12] dated in the ninth regnal year of Raṇabhañja, grandson of Śilābhañja I Āṅgaḍḍi, as *vaṇik-suvarṇakāra* Padmanābha, son of Pāṇḍi, who engraved that charter. We have roughly assigned the reigns of Śilābhañja I, Śatrubhañja, and Raṇabhañja of Khiñjali-maṇḍala respectively to the first, second and third quarters of the tenth century. The record in question simply says that the village resold was originally purchased from Śilābhañja, and does not mean that Śilābhañja was alive when the document was prepared. This fact, together with the other that Padmanābha, engraver of this record, also engraved a grant of the ninth regnal year of Raṇabhañja, would suggest that the *kraya-śāsana* was prepared not much earlier than the second quarter of the tenth century.

The Bhañjas gave their name to the Bhañjabhūmi or Bhañjbhūm which includes the present Mayūrbhañj area. Similarly there are

11 *Cat. of C.P. Grants in the Govt. Mus.*, Madras, 1918, p. 58.
12 *JBORS*, VI, pp. 483 ff.

other neighbouring territories with names of this type, e.g. Mānbhūm or Mānabhūmi, the land of the Mānas; Singhbhūm or Siṁhabhūmi, the land of the Siṁhas; Bīrbhūm or Vīrabhūmi, the land of the Vīras; Dhalbhūm or Dhavalabhūmi, the land of the Dhavalas; Barābhūm or Varāhabhūmi, the land of the Varāhas; Śekharbhūm or Śekharabhūmi, the land of the Śekharas; Mallabhūm or Mallabhūmi, the land of the Mallas; etc. As regards Dhalbhūm or Dhavalabhūmi, it is interesting to note that the names of the ruling chiefs of this territory are known to have ended with the word Dhavala, that is to say that they belonged to a Dhavala dynasty. Indeed some of the late-medieval rulers of Dhalbhum are famous in the history of Bengali literature. Gopinātha-dhavala and his son Ananta-dhavala, who was the patron of the poet Jagannath Sen, author of the *Hitopadeśa-pāñchālī*, are both mentioned in that work. There is another Dhavala ruling family in the heart of Orissa. The members of the Dompārā Rāja family in the Cuttack district bear names ending with the word *dhavala*. It is indeed difficult to determine in the present state of our knowledge what relations the present Dhavala dynasties may have had with the ancient Dhavala dynasty of Orissa represented by king Narendra-dhavala. But it is not improbable that they are offshoots of the old royal family.

(4) *The Later Śailodbhavas*

We have seen that Sainyabhīta Mādhava-varman II of the Śailodbhava dynasty of Koṅgoda (in the present Ganjam district) acknowledged the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa. But Mādhava-varman II seems to have assumed independence after the death of Śaśāṅka when he issued the Khurda grant with the title 'Lord of Kaliṅga'.[13] For whereas his Ganjam plates dated in the Gupta year 300 (A.D. 619) invoke the name of Śaśāṅka as suzerain, his other records, viz, the Khurda,[14] Buguda,[15] Puri,[16] and Cuttack Museum plates,[17] were issued later without any reference to an overlord. Some of these later records credit him with the performance of the *Asvamedha* sacrifice. Evidently this was celebrated to commemorate the throwing off of the

13 It has been suggested that the Puri plates of the 50th regnal year of Mādhava-varman II refer to his overlord Lokanātha. I, am, however, inclined to take Lokanātha as a feudatory of the Śailodbhava king.

14 *JASB*, LXIII, p. 284.

15 *EI*. III, p. 43. The letters in this inscription appear to be much later. The original document seems to have been copied on the plates at a later date.

16 *EI*. XXIV, p. 151. The date of the plate has been doubtfully read as 23, but seems to be 13.

17 This is dated in the 50th regnal year.

Gauḍa yoke. Since he ruled for at least fifty years, his reign may be tentatively assigned to the period A.D. 610-62. He appears to have been the ruler of Kaliṅga when the Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang visited the Koṅgoda country about A.D. 639. The pilgrim says: 'The country contained some tens of towns which stretched from the slopes of the hills to the edge of the sea. As the towns were naturally strong, there was a gallant army which kept the neighbouring countries in awe, and so there was no powerful enemy.'

After having assumed independence, the Śailodbhavas appear to have abandoned the use of the Gupta Era. But the independence of the family was seriously threatened about A.D. 643, when the Pushyabhūti king Harsha, after subduing the Gauḍas, made an attempt to recover Koṅgoda, the lost dependency of Gauḍa. Harsha's success against the Śailodbhavas may not have been conspicuous, but the Buddhist kings of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty, who appear to have received his favour, ultimately conquered the Koṅgoda country.

Sainyabhīta Mādhava-varman II was succeeded by his son Ayaśobhīta Madhyamarāja who celebrated the *Vājapeya* and *Aśvamedha* sacrifices. His Parikud plates are dated in his 26th regnal year[18] and his reign may be placed between A.D. 662 and 690.

Ayaśobhīta Madhyamarāja was succeeded by his son Dharmarāja Mānabhīta who probably ruled from *c.* A.D. 690 to 725. The date of his Kondedda grant issued from Saumyapura and of the Puri grant issued from Mātṛichachātaka seems to be the regnal year 12. It has, however, been supposed to be the year 312 of the Gupta Era in spite of the facts that his grandfather ruled in the Gupta year 300 and that his father ruled for about 26 years. A king named Mādhava, who was probably a younger brother of Dharmarāja and the usurper of his throne, was defeated by Dharmarāja at the battle of Phāsikā. Mādhava then applied for help to king Trivara, who cannot be identified but was probably a later Pāṇḍuvaṁśī ruler of South Kosala. But the combined forces of Mādhava and Trivara were shattered by Dharmarāja at the foot of the Vindhyas.

The successor of Dharmarāja Mānabhīta was his son Madhyamarāja II who was succeeded by his own son Raṇakshobha. Raṇakshobha's successor was Allaparāja, the son of the former's paternal uncle. Another king of the family was Madhyamarāja III, son of *yuvarāja* Tailapanibha, whose relation with the other rulers cannot be

18 The date is given in words in l. 45 of the record (*EI*, XI, p. 284) and this seems to have been repeated in figures in the last line. These figures have, however, been read in various ways.

determined. The major part of the Koṅgoda country was probably conquered by the Bhauma-Karas as noted above (p. 494).

(5) *The Śulkīs*

The inscriptions of the Śulkīs (also called *Solkī, Śaulkika,* etc.)[19] have been found in Dhenkanal and Talcher. They are probably mentioned in the Hāṛahā inscription of Maukhari Īśāna-varman as Śūlika. The rulers of this family originally assumed feudatory titles and appear to have owed allegiance to the Bhauma-Karas. They issued their charters from the capital city of Kodāloka, and their family deity was the goddess Stambheśvarī.[20] Kodāloka is possibly to be identified with modern Koālu (about 6 miles from Talcher) on the left bank of the Brahmani in the Dhenkanal subdivision of the Dhenkanal district, Orissa.

One of the earliest records of the family is the Dhenkanal plate of *Samasta-mahāsāmant-ādhipati* Raṇastambha who acquired the *pañchamahāśabda* and was a worshipper of Maheśvara. The date of this record has been read by H. P. Sastri as 30, and by D. R. Bhandarkar as 203, although the correct reading seems to be 103. The era to which the date should be referred is undoubtedly the same as that found in the records of the Bhauma-Karas. This shows that Raṇastambha of the Śulkī family of the Dhenkanal-Talcher region was a feudatory of the contemporary Bhauma-Kara king Śubhākara III whose Hindol and Dharakoṭa plates are dated in the year 103.

19 There is a people called Śulkī in the Midnapur district of West Bengal. Some scholars (cf. Majumdar, *Orissa in the Making,* p. 101 ff.) suggested that the original home of the Śulkī royal family of Orissa was also in Midnapur. The view, however, that the dominions of the Śulkīs of Orissa included the Hooghly district in Bengal (cf. Banerji, *History of Orissa,* I, pp. 195-96) is unsupported by any evidence. The theory is based on the identification of the village of Jārā, granted by Raṇastambha in favour of Brāhmaṇa who hailed from a village in the *Rādhamaṇḍala,* with the village of that name in the Hooghly district. But there is absolutely no evidence in support of the identification.

20 I have elsewhere suggested that Stambheśvarī was probably the Devī represented on a Śiva-liṅga. It should, however, be pointed out that Stambheśvarī or Khambeśvarī is still worshipped by the aboriginal people of Orissa in the shape of a pillar or post. See Majumdar, *op. cit.* pp. 107 ff.

The Kalahandi plates of Mahārāja Tushṭikara, who flourished in the fifth or sixth century A.D., also mentions that ruler as a worshipper of the goddess Stambheśvarī. Whether, however, the Śulkīs claimed descent from Tushṭikara, and their family deity was the very same as that adored by that earlier king, cannot be determined. It is also uncertain if the pillar of Stambheśvarī at present standing at the centre of the town of Sonpur has anything to do with Tushṭikara and the rulers of the Śulkī dynasty.

The Talcher plate appears to be a later record of Raṇastambha. In this inscription the king is endowed with a combination of feudatory and imperial epithets, which is probably due to his success in a struggle with the Bhauma-Karas. It is learnt from this record that Raṇastambha was also known as Kulastambha, and that he was the son of Kalahastambha-Vikramāditya and the grandson of Kāñchanastambha. The Jaragram plate of this king also gives the names of the father and grandfather of Raṇastambha respectively as Kalahastambha (wrongly read by H. P. Sastri as *Kulastambha*) and Kāñchanastambha.

The Bhimagarigarh plate is usually ascribed to the same king named Raṇastambha alias Kulastambha, although its issuer seems actually to have been king Kulastambha, son of Raṇastambha. In this record the reigning king is described as the lord of the whole Gondrama with Śaṅkhajoṭi forming the borderland of his kingdom.

Another son of Raṇastambha was king Jayastambha. Three copper-plate inscriptions of this king were discovered at Dhenkanal. In one of them Jayastambha is said to have been the son of Raṇastambha and grandson of Kulastambha (a mistake for Kalahastambha *alias* Vikramāditya). The other two records give the name of Jayastambha's father respectively as Nidayastambha and Ālānastambha both of which appear to have been different names of Raṇastambha. Ālānastambha (i.e. Raṇastambha) is represented in Jayastambha's Dhenkanal inscription as the son of Vikramāditya-Kanadastambha (a mistake for Kalahastambha) and the grandson of Kāñchanastambha. Jayastambha is endowed with both imperial and feudatory epithets.

Another inscription is a charter of King Kulastambha, son of Jayastambha and grandson of Raṇastambha. The most interesting fact about this inscription is that it was written by the *bhogika* Kalyāna who seems to be no other than the *bhogin* Kalyāṇadeva, the writer of the Dhenkanal plate of Raṇastambha dated in the year 103. This shows that the same person served both the earliest and latest known kings of the family who issued charters. The rule of the family from its third member Raṇastambha *alias* Kulastambha down to his grandson Kulastambha of the record referred to above thus apparently ruled for a rather short period. It seems that this was a period of struggle between the Sulkīs and their overlords, the Bhauma-Karas, who probably succeeded ultimately in overpowering their recalcitrant feudatories. The first and second rulers of the family, viz Kāñchanastambha and Vikramāditya-Kalāhastambha, may have been loyal feudatories of the Bhauma-Karas.

(6) *The Rulers of Yamagartā*

Yamagartā was the name of a *maṇḍala* that formed a part of the dominions of the Bhauma-Karas. The exact location of this territory is unknown. Since, however, some records of the rulers of Yamagartā have been found in Talcher and Bonai, it may be suggested that the Yamagartā-*maṇḍala* lay in the valley of the river Brahmani to the west and south-west of the dominions of the Bhañjas of Khiñjalī-*maṇḍala* and Khijjiṅga-*koṭṭa*.

The earliest known ruler of Yamagartā is Jayasiṁha known from the Dhenkanal plates dated according to an era. The date of the charter has been read as 88, but it is possibly 128. As the era, though unspecified, is apparently no other than that used by the Bhauma-Karas, Jayasiṁha seems to have been the feudatory of a Bhauma-Kara monarch.

Soon after Jayasiṁha, the Yamagartā-*maṇḍala* seems to have passed to the rulers of a different dynasty, called the Tuṅgavaṁśa. The Tuṅga kings appear to have had their capital at a hill-fort called Mahāparvata. Whether this may be the hill of the same name to the south of the Mahānadī in the Cuttack district (Survey of India Sheet Map No. 73 H/ii) is unknown. The Bonai plates of *Mahārāja-Rāṇaka* Vinītatuṅga show that this ruler claimed to be the lord of the 18 Gondramas (possibly the same as Oriya *Aṭhara-Garajāt* roughly indicating certain forts or States) and of the Yamagartā-*maṇḍala*. Vinītatuṅga was a devout worshipper of Śiva, and his feudatory character is clearly demonstrated by his epithet *Rāṇaka* and by his claim to have attained the *Pañcha-mahāśabda*. He is said to have belonged to the Śāṇḍilya *gotra*, and to have come originally from Rohitāgiri (probably Rohtāsgarh in the Shahabad district of Bihar). He had a son named Khaḍgatuṅga who seems to have been ruling some part of his father's dominions apparently as a viceroy. The most interesting fact about Vinītatuṅga is that he is mentioned as a feudatory in both the Talcher plates (dated in the year 149) of the Bhauma-Kara king Śivakara III Lalitahāra.

A descendant of Vinītatuṅga was Gayāḍatuṅga known from his Talcher and Bengal Asiatic Society's plates. Gayāḍatuṅga's epithets are the same as those of Vinītatuṅga; but he is described as the son of Salāṇatuṅga who is said to have been born in the family of *Rājan* Jagattuṅga. It is interesting to note that this Jagattuṅga is described in the records of Gayāḍatuṅga as belonging to the Śāṇḍilya *gotra* and as emigrating from Rohitāgiri exactly as Vinītatuṅga in the Bonai plates. This suggests that Jagattuṅga was either just another name of Vinītatuṅga or that Jagattuṅga was a relation (possibly

brother) of Vinītatuṅga, and that the two migrated to Orissa together. There is no doubt that Gayāḍatuṅga was named after the Bhauma-Kara king Śāntikara II Gayāḍa who was the father of Śivakara III. Possibly the family came to Orissa during the reign of Śāntikara II Gayāḍa and was favoured by that king. This fact suggests further that there was no long interval between Vinītatuṅga and Gayāḍatuṅga, and that the latter may have been the immediate successor of the former. This is further indicated by the fact that the Yamagartā-*maṇḍala* is known to have been under a ruler of a different family during the reign of queen Daṇḍimahādevī who was the grand-daughter of Śivakara III.

An inscription (dated in the year 180) of Daṇḍimahādevī mentions her feudatory Apsarodeva, ruler of the Yamagartā-*maṇḍala*. This shows that the Tuṅga dynasty of Yamagartā made way for a new feudatory family represented by Apsarodeva.

(7) *The Vigrahas*

The existence of a dynasty of ancient Orissa rulers having names ending with the word *vigraha* seems to be suggested by two records.[21] The Kanasa grant speaks of a king named Loka-vigraha. Later, an extremely interesting inscription of the time of Pṛithivī-vigraha, possibly another king of the same family, was discovered at Sumaṇḍala in the Khallikote area. The most important passage in this record reads *varttamāna-Gupta-rājye varsha-śatadvaye pañchāśad-uttare Kaliṅga-rāshṭram-anuśāsati śrī-Pṛithivī-vigraha-bhaṭṭārake.* It speaks of Gupta rule in Kaliṅga in the Gupta year 250, corresponding to A.D. 569, although the Gupta Empire had ceased to exist several dacades earlier. The fact that the Gupta Era was used in the Ganjam inscription of Śaśāṅka, but not in his Midnapur grants, would suggest Gupta influence in Kaliṅga. As regards the continuation of Gupta rule in Kaliṅga as late as A.D. 569, it may be suggested that the Vigrahas were probably themselves scions of the Imperial Guptas on the female side owing nominal allegiance to the Gupta Emperors.

The Sumaṇḍala inscription actually records the grant of a feudatory of Pṛithivī-vigraha whose name was *Mahārāja* Dharmarāja. This chief is described as *Mahārāj-Obhay-ānvaya* (i.e. descendant or son of Mahārāja Ubhaya) and as born of queen Bappadevī. His headquarters were at Padmakholī from where he granted two villages situated in the Parakkhalamārgga-*vishaya*. These places were apparently situated about modern Khallikote in Orissa.

21 *IHQ*, XXVI, pp. 75-79.

IV. EASTERN DECCAN

(1) *The Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅganagara and Dantapura*

The early Eastern Gaṅgas appear to have represented a branch of the Gaṅga family of Mysore. They issued their inscriptions mostly from the city of Kaliṅganagara, identified with modern Mukhaliṅgam in the Ganjam district. Some records of the Gaṅga kings of Kaliṅganagara were issued from Dantapura which is usually identified with Dantavaktra near Chicacole in the same district, and may have been a secondary capital of the rulers of this family. A minor branch of the family is known to have ruled at a place called Śvetaka. In all their grants the early Eastern Gaṅgas express their devotion to the god Gokarṇeśvara (Śiva) whose temple stood on a peak of the Mahendra mountain. Apparently the temple of this family-deity of the Gaṅgas was situated on modern Mahendragiri in the Ganjam district.

The founder of the Eastern Gaṅga dynasty was king Indra-varman I one of whose records is dated in the 39th year of his reign. His regnal reckoning was continued by his successors so as to give rise to an era. The initial year of this era, that corresponded to the first regnal year of Indra-varman I, appears to have fallen in A.D. 496 or probably some time in the period A.D. 496-99. Indra-varman I thus seems to have ruled from *c.* A.D. 496 to 535.

Indra-varman I claimed to have been the lord of Trikaliṅga. The exact identification of the Trikaliṅga country, as already noted, is difficult in the present state of our knowledge. But it seems that in a narrow sense it indicated a country or a forest tract, between the Veṅgī-Pishṭapura region and the Gaṅga kingdom, lying to the south of Dakshiṇakosala, not far from the Mahendragiri. In a wider sense, however, it appears to have signified a larger territory including Kaliṅga and some neighbouring countries such as South Kosala. It is interesting to note that the title 'Lord of Trikaliṅga' was first assumed by the Gaṅgas of Kaliṅganagara, next by the Somavaṁśīs of Kosala and Utkala, and then by the Kalachuris who are known to have extended their power over parts of Kosala.

King Indra-varman I seems to have been succeeded by Sāmanta-varman or Mahāsāmanta-varman who is known from an inscription of the year 60 of the Gaṅga era corresponding to *c.* A.D. 556. Sāmanta-varman's relation with Indra-varman I is as yet unknown. The next king *Mahārāja* Hasti-varman, also called Rājasiṁha and Raṇabhīta, issued his charters in the years 79 (*c.* A.D. 575) and 80 (*c.* A.D. 576), and was probably succeeded by Indra-varman II *alias* Rājasiṁha whose

inscriptions are dated in the years 87 (*c.* A.D. 583) and 91 (*c.* A.D. 587). It is not unlikely that Sāmanta-varman and Hasti-varman were both sons of Indra-varman I, and that Indra-varman II was a son of Hasti-varman. Indra-varman II assumed the title Rājasiṁha possibly to distinguish himself from his ancestor Indra-varman I. The earliest inscription of the next king Indra-varman III, who seems to have felt no special necessity to distinguish himself from Indra-varman II, surnamed Rājasiṁha, is dated in the year 128 (*c.* A.D. 624). The next ruler was Indra-varman IV who clearly distinguishes himself from his earlier namesakes by the patronymic 'son of Dānārṇava'. We do not know, however, if this Dānārṇava ruled the Gaṅga kingdom for some time. His son describes himself as a devout worshipper of Maheśvara. The latest known date of Indra-varman IV is the year 154 (*c.* A.D. 650).

Nothing is known about the relation of the above rulers with *Mahārāja* Devendra-varman, who describes himself as a devotee of Maheśvara and a son of Guṇārṇava, and claims to have obtained the whole of Kaliṅga by his own prowess. His known dates range between the years 183 (*c.* A.D. 679) and 195 (*c.* A.D. 691). Whether his father Guṇārṇava ruled for some years in the period between *c.* 650 and *c.* 679 is as yet unknown. But we know that Devendra-varman was succeeded by his son Ananta-varman who issued the Parlakimedi grant in the year 204 (*c.* A.D. 700). He had two sons both of whom became kings. The first of them was *Mahārāja* Nanda-varman (Indra-varman according to some writers) known from his Santa Bommali grant of the year 221 (*c.* A.D 717), and the second, *Mahārāja* Devendra-varman II, who issued his charters in the year 251 (*c.* A.D. 747) and 254 (*c.* A.D. 750)

Devendra-varman II seems to have been succeeded by Rājendra-varman I, whose son Ananta-varman II is known from his records of the Gaṅga years 284 (*c.* A.D. 780) and 304 (*c.* A.D. 800). The next ruler was Devendra-varman III who was younger brother of Ananta-varman II and issued charters in the Gaṅga years 308 (A.D. 804) and 310 (*c.* A.D. 806). The throne next passed on to Rājendra-varman II who was a son of Ananta-varman II. The known dates of Rājendra-varman II range between the Gaṅga years 313 (*c.* A.D. 809) and 342 (*c.* A.D. 838). He was succeeded by his cousin Satya-varman who was a son of Devendra-varman III. Satya-varman is known from an inscription dated in the Gaṅga year 351 (*c.* A.D. 847). He seems to have been succeeded by his younger brother Ananta-varman III known from an inscription of the Gaṅga year 358 (*c.* A.D. 854). The next ruler of the family appears to have been Bhūpendra-varman Mārasiṁha

whose son Devendra-varman IV issued the Cheedivalasa grant in the Gaṅga year 397 (*c.* A.D. 893) in favour of some Vaṅgaja Brāhmaṇas.

The history of the Eastern Gaṅga kingdom in the tenth century A.D. is wrapped up in obscurity. After Devendra-varman IV, the earliest records of the family are those of king Vajrahasta-Aniyaṅkabhīma, who belonged to a branch of the family usually styled Later or Greater Gaṅga, and ruled in the period *c.* A.D. 980-1015. He was the grandfather of the celebrated Vajrahasta-Ananta-varman who was crowned in A.D. 1038. During the tenth century the Gaṅga kingdom seems to have been split up into five small principalities including those of the Gaṅgas of Śvetaka and the Kadambas of Jayantyāpura. The claim of Vijayāditya III (A.D. 848-92) of the Eastern Chālukya dynasty to have subdued the king of Kaliṅga as well as the introduction of the Śaka era seems to point to Eastern Chālukya influence on the Gaṅga kingdom during this century.

The relation of the Greater Gaṅga king Vajrahasta-Aniyaṅkabhīma and his predecessors with the early Gaṅga kings of Kaliṅga cannot be determined. There is also a good deal of discrepancy in the two different accounts found in inscriptions in regard to the predecessors of this king. The genealogy given in the records of his grandson Vajrahasta-Ananta-varman (crowned in A.D. 1038) speaks of Guṇamahārṇava of the Ātreya *gotra* who acquired the glory of *sāmrājya;* his son Vajrahasta (44 years), who united the earth divided into five kingdoms; his three sons Guṇḍama (3 years), Kāmārṇava (35 years), and Vinayāditya (3 years); Kāmārṇava's son Vajrahasta-Aniyaṅkabhīma (35 years). According to this account, Guṇamahārṇava was the founder of this branch of the family and his son Vajrahasta succeeded, at least partially, in uniting the disjointed parts of the kingdom under his sway. This account of the rise of the greater Gaṅgas is not an improbable one, but a slightly later account, which is apparently doubtful, gives a different story. It traces the descent of the family from Ananta or Vishṇu, Brahman born from Vishṇu's navel, Atri born of Brahman's mind, and the Moon born of Atri's eye. This is apparently fabricated on the basis of the name of the *gotrarshi* of the family, as well as of the eagerness to trace the descent of the family from Vishṇu after the conversion of Ananta-varman Choḍagaṅga (A.D. 1087-1147) from Śaivism to Vaishṇavism. The Purāṇic account of the lunar dynasty is then followed in giving the genealogy from the Moon to Yayāti's son Turvasu. It is then said that Turvasu got, by the favour of the goddess Gaṅgā, a son named Gāṅgeya whose descendants were called Gaṅga. Kolāhala *alias* Ananta-varman, founder of Kolāhalapura (modern Kolar in Mysore) in the Gaṅgavāḍi-*vishaya,* was the seventeenth in descent from Gāṅgeya. Here is a

clear attempt to trace the descent of the Gaṅgas of Orissa from those of Mysore, although the latter claimed to have belonged to the Kāṇvāyana *gotra* and descended from the solar dynasty of Ikshvāku. Kolāhala's son was Virochana in whose lineage, after 81 kings had flourished at Kolāhalapura, came Vīrasiṁha. Vīrasiṁha's son Kāmārṇava came to Kaliṅga where he worshipped the god Gokarṇasvāmin (Gokarṇeśvara) on the Mahendra mountain and obtained from him the bull crest and the insignia of sovereignty. He conquered Kaliṅga from a king named Bālāditya and ruled for 36 years at the city of Jantrāvura. His successors were: his younger brother Dānārṇava (40 years), his son Kāmārṇava (50 years), his son Raṇārṇava (5 years), his son Vajrahasta (15 years), and his younger brother Kāmārṇava (19 years). The son and successor of Kāmārṇava was Guṇamahārṇava (27 years), who is no doubt the homonymous king described in the older account as the founder of the Greater Gaṅga family. The present account, however, gives the following names of the successors of Guṇamahārṇava: his son Jitāṅkuśa (15 years), his brother's son Kaligalāṅkuśa (12 years), his uncle Guṇḍama (7 years), his brother Kāmārṇava (25 years), and his brother Vinayāditya (3 years). Some scholars believe that this Kāmārṇava and Vinayāditya are mentioned in the Conjeeveram inscription of Jaṭāchoḍa-Bhīma dated A.D. 1001-2. The next ruler was Kāmārṇava's son Vajrahasta-Aniyaṅkabhīma, who is no doubt the homonymous king also known from the older account as flourishing in *c.* A.D. 980-1015. The second account resembles the fabricated genealogies of the Pallavas, Eastern Chālukyas and other dynasties, and its details are very probably unhistorical.

The rise of the Greater Gaṅgas about the close of the tenth century seems to have been related to the Chola expedition against Kaliṅga during the reign of Rājarāja Chola who claims to have conquered that country some time before A.D. 1003. The fact that Kaliṅga is not mentioned in the list of eastern countries conquered by Rājendra Chola's armies shortly before A.D. 1023 seems to suggest that the Gaṅga king of that country was then regarded as a subordinate of the Cholas. The Greater Gaṅgas, who are known to have employed Chola officials and contracted matrimonial alliances with the Cholas, probably gained power under the patronage of the Chola conquerors of Kaliṅga. But Chola influence on them was shortlived and nominal.

(2) *The Gaṅgas of Śvetaka*

When the main branch of the Early Eastern Gaṅgas was ruling from Kaliṅganagara and Dantapura, a minor branch of the family flourished at a place called Śvetaka, the name being often read as Śchetaka and identified with modern Chīkaṭi in the Somapeta *tāluk*

in the district of Ganjam. The earliest known king of the Śvetaka branch of the Gaṅga family is *Mahārāja* Jaya-varman, so far known from three records. One of his two Parlakimedi grants seems to be the late copy of a genuine record dated in the Gaṅga year 100 (*c.* A.D. 596). His Ganjam grant, which seems to be dated in the Gaṅga year 120 (*c.* A.D. 616), records the gift of a village in the Koṅgoda-*maṇḍala*. This charter was re-issued by Rāṇaka Vishavārṇava on behalf of the Bhauma-kara king Unmaṭṭakesarin (p. 493). This seems to indicate a tripartite struggle among the Śailodbhavas of Koṅgoda, the Gaṅgas of Śvetaka, and the Bhauma-Karas, which possibly facilitated the conquest of the east coast by Śaśāṅka and invited the invasion of Harsha. Jaya-varman was originally a Rāṇaka, i.e. a feudatory, apparently of the Gaṅga king of Kaliṅganagara. Like the Gaṅgas of the main branch, the kings of Śvetaka were also worshippers of Gokarṇeśvara. They often claim to have made the whole of Kaliṅga feel the weight of their arms.

Mahārāja Sāmanta-varman, who issued the Cheedivalasa grant in the Gaṅga year 185 (*c.* A.D. 681), was another early king of Śvetaka. He claims to have been the lord of the whole of Kaliṅga, although his relations with Jaya-varman and with his Gaṅga contemporary on the throne of Kaliṅganagara are unknown. A later ruler of Śvetaka was *Mahārāja* Indra-varman of the Vishamagiri grant, assigned on palaeographical grounds to the eighth or ninth century. The rulers of Śvetaka appear to have been semi-independent feudatories of the Gaṅgas of Kaliṅganagara; but on occasions they assumed complete independence.

A group of later rulers of Śvetaka were king Mahendra-varman, his son Pṛithvī-varman, and his sons Indra-varman and Dānārṇava, all of whom may be roughly assigned to the tenth century. The Śvetaka king Bhūpendra-varman, son of Kailāsa, seems to have flourished still later. The latest known king of the Śvetaka branch of the Gaṅga family was Devendra-varman, who was the overlord of the Kadamba chief Bhīmakheḍi II (Śaka 988, A.D. 1066), and his brohter Udayāditya or Udayakheṭi (Śaka 1003, A.D. 1081). The Śvetaka house was completely overthrown by the Greater Gaṅga king Ananta-varman Choḍa-gaṅga about the close of the eleventh century.

(3) *The Eastern Chālukyas*[22]

Pulakeśin II of the Chālukya house of Bādāmi had a younger brother named Vishṇu-vardhana who was also known as Kubja Vishṇu-

22 Dr. Sircar's statements have been in some cases omitted or modified so as to bring this section in a line with Chapter XVI on the Rāshṭrakūṭas written by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (Ed.).

vardhana and Prithivī-duvarāja (i.e. Prithivī-yuvarāja or Prithivī-vallabha yuvarāja). The Kopparam grant[23] suggests that Vishṇu-vardhana aided Pulakeśin II in conquering the east coast country before A.D. 631. The Satara grant[24] of A.D. 617 shows that this 'dear' younger brother of Pulakeśin II was then ruling over parts of the South Maratha country as *yuvarāja* and viceroy of his elder brother. In that capacity he granted the village of Alandatīrtha, identified with modern Alundh, about 35 miles to the north of Satara, in favour of certain Brāhmaṇas. A tradition recorded in the *Avanti-sundarīkathāsāra* refers to one *narendra* Vishṇu-vardhana of the Nasik region who was a contemporary of Pallava Siṁhavishṇu of Kāñchī and king Durvinīta, apparently the Gaṅga king of that name. This may mean that Vishṇu-vardhana was ruling the whole land from Satara to Nasik, or even all the home country of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi when Pulakeśin was absent in connection with his campaigns.

Some time before 631 (about 620 according to some writers), Pulakeśin II subdued the king of Pishṭapura (Piṭhāpuram in the Godāvari district) and the last known ruler of the Vishṇukuṇḍin family in the region of Kunāla or Kollair lake near Ellore. According to the Kopparam inscription dated in the twenty-first regnal year of Pulakeśin II (A.D. 630-31), Prithivīduvarāja (Vishṇu-vardhana) made, in the presence of Pulakeśin, a grant of land in the Karma-rāshṭra, which comprised parts of Guntur and Nellore districts. He was thus the viceroy of his elder brother in the newly conquered territory extending along the coast from the Viśākhapattanaṁ to the Nellore district. He was already well on his way to independence, and soon assumed the title of *Mahārāja* and became the founder of the Eastern Chālukya dynasty of the Andhra country (Veṅgī).

Vishṇu-vardhana had the titles *makaradhvaja and vishamasiddhi;* the former, meaning 'cupid', is almost ironical, considering that he is more often described as *Kubja* (hump-back),[25] the latter a compliment to his success in difficult enterprises, particularly in the subjugation of impregnable fortresses. His Timmāpuraṁ and Chīpurapalle grants[26] were issued from the city of Pishṭapura which was no doubt his capital. They record grants of land in the present Sarvasiddhi and Chīpparupalle *tāluks* of the Viśākhapattanam district. A Śūdra general named Buddha-varman, the founder of the Durjaya family, was appointed by Vishṇu-vardhana I as governor of a dis-

23 *EI,* XVIII, p. 260.

24 *IA,* XIX, p. 310.

25 See, however, *Eastern Chālukyas,* p. 63 for a suggestion that Kubja Vishṇu means Vāmana.

26 *EI,* IX, p. 317; *IA,* XX, p. 15.

trict styled *Giripaśchima* or 'west of the hill'.[27] This tract of land, comprising seventy-three villages, corresponds roughly to a part of the present Sattenapalle *tāluq* of the Guntur district. A certain Aṭavi-Durjaya of the Matsya family figures as the *ājñāpti* in the Chipurapalle plates. Ayyana-mahādevī, queen of Vishṇu-vardhana, is known to have been the executrix of a grant in favour of a Jain temple at Bijavāḍa, modern Vijayavāḍa, in the Krishṇa district. The temple was perhaps built by the queen and named Naḍumbibasadi. This is the earliest mention of Jainism in the Telugu country.[28] It is thus clear that Vishṇu-vardhana's dominion included the major part of the Viśākhapattanam district in the north and extended to the Nellore district in the south.

Kālakampa of the Paṭṭavardhani family, a general of Vishṇu-vardhana I, is said to have killed a chief named Daddara and seized his insignia.[29] The identity of the chief and of his territory are alike obscure. Vishṇu-vardhana's rule lasted for eighteen years (624-41).[30] He was followed on the throne by his son Jayasiṁha I (641-73) who had the title Sarvasiddhi, among others. The majority of grants give him a regnal period of thirty-three years, though some put it at thirty. Several grants of his reign are known, but little of his history. A *ghaṭikā*, college of higher education, is said to have been functioning at Asanapura whence he issued one of his grants. Like his father, Jayasimha was a Bhāgavata. A stone inscription from Vipparla dated in his eighth year counts among the earliest known Telugu inscriptions.[31] If Udayapura, from which Jayasiṁha issued the Pedda Maddali plates,[32] is the same as Udayagiri in the Nellore district, the southern frontier of his kingdom must have extended beyond Mannéṛu and included the northern parts of the present Nellore district. His Mroparu grant[33] mentions Maṅgi-yuvarāja, usually identified with the grandson of Indra-varman and son of Vishṇu-vardhana II, although it is not clear why Maṅgi was chosen as *yuvarāja* though his father and grandfather were alive and active.

27 214 of 1892; also *EI*, VI, pp. 269-70.

28 *ARE*, 1916-17; Cp. 9 of 1916-17 and II, 21. The date (Svādita) S. 684 and the name of the ruler Vishṇu-vardhana who renewed the original grant are not easy to reconcile.

29 *SII*, I., p. 40.

30. Eastern Chālukya chronology bristles with many minor problems, and the copiousness of astronomical data from the inscriptions and the regnal periods mentioned in them have given rise to many discussions which cannot be reviewed here. See N. Venkataramanayya, *Eastern Chālukyas of Veṅgī* (Madras, 1950).

31 No. 147 of 1899 (*SII*, VI, No. 584).

32 *IA*, XIII, p. 137.

33 Cp. 9 of 1919-20.

Early in Jayasiṁha's reign Pulakeśin II of Bādāmi was defeated and killed by the Pallavas of Kāñchī who occupied the southern part of the Early Chālukya empire including the city of Bādāmi. Chālukya authority was eventually restored by Vikramāditya I about A.D. 655. In these difficulties the Early Chālukyas do not appear to have received any help from their Eastern Chālukya relative.

Jayasiṁha's successor was his brother *Mahārāja* Indra-varman (also Indrarāja and Indrabhaṭṭāraka) who bore the title Tyāgadhenu (Cow of liberality).[34] He is said to have ruled only for a week, although he may have enjoyed considerable administrative power during the later part of his elder brother's rule. Indra-varman was succeeded by his son Vishṇu-vardhana II. He had the titles *makaradhvaja and vishamasiddhi* like Vishṇu-vardhana I, and *pralayāditya* in addition, and ruled for nine years (673-81). His son and successor Maṅgi *yuvarāja*, also known as *Vijayasiddhi*, reigned for twenty-five years (681-705). Maṅgi had three sons Jayasiṁha II, Vishṇu-vardhana III, and Kokkuli, and a daughter Prithivī Pori. Jayasiṁha II, who had the titles *sarvasiddhi* and *niravadya*, succeeded his father and reigned for thirteen years (705-17); his western Chālukyan contemporary Vijayāditya (696-733) also had the title *niravadya*. After Jayasiṁha II, there occurred the first succession dispute for the Eastern Chālukyan throne. Kokkuli, the younger of the two surviving step-brothers, seized the kingdom and ruled it for six months. The only record[35] of his reign calls him Kokkuli Vikramāditya Bhaṭṭāraka and gives him the title Vijayasiddhi, Kokkuli's short reign came to an end when his elder brother Vishṇu-vardhana III expelled him from the throne. Some writers believe that the quarrel ended in a compromise by which Kokkuli was allowed to rule in Madhyama-Kaliṅga with Elamanchili as his capital, and that his dynasty lasted for at least three generations after him during the reigns of his son Maṅgi Varma *Mahārāja*, grandson Vinayāditya Varma *Mahārāja*, and great-grandson Mahārāja Anivārita.[36]

After he had driven out the usurping younger brother, Vishṇu-vardhana III enjoyed a long reign of thirty-seven years (718-54). He had the titles *samasta-bhuvanāśraya*, *tribhuvanāṅkuśa* and *vishamasiddhi*. His chief queen Vijayamahādevī figures as the *ājñapti* in one of his grants.[37] Another grant is made by the king's sister Prithivī

34 *EI*, XVIII, p. 3.
35 Cp. 13 of 1908-9
36 Cp. 10-12 of 1908-9. There is a difference of opinion as regards the genealogy of the Elamanchili line and its relation to the main line. See e.g. *IHQ*, VIII, p. 777.
37 Cp. 9 of 1913-14.

Poṛi.[38] According to some writers, one of the king's subordinates, a Nishāda or Boya chieftain Pṛithivīvyāghra, came into conflict with the famous Pallava general Udayachandra when he attempted to seize the *aśvamedha* horse let loose by Nandi-varman II. But there is a controversy as regards the identity of Pṛithivīvyāghra, who is moreover believed by some to have been the performer of the *aśvamedha* referred to. Prithivīvyāghra sustained a defeat in battle and had to surrender large quantities of gold and pearls, besides several elephants. Some of Vishṇu-vardhana's territory was also annexed by the Pallava ruler on the occasion.[39]

The successor of Vishṇu-vardhana III was his son by Vijaya-mahādevī, Vijayādityā I (754-72) who bore the titles *tribhuvanāṅkuśa, vijayasiddhi, śakti-varman* and *vikrama-Rāma*. Early in his reign occurred the political revolution in Western Deccan by which the Rāshṭra-kūṭa Dantidurga put an end to the rule of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and established the power of his own dynasty. The subsequent history of the Eastern Chālukyas is characterised by a long-drawn struggle with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Dantidurga's uncle and successor Kṛishṇa I despatched a large army against Veṅgī under his son *yuvarāja* Govinda II; according to the Alas plates (A.D. 769),[40] the Eastern Chālukya king (either Vijayāditya or his successor) met the invader in his camp at the confluence of the Musi and the Krishṇā rivers, and saved himself 'by the cession of his treasury, his forces and his country'.

Vijayāditya I was succeeded by his son Vishṇu-vardhana IV who ruled for thirty-six years (772-808). His vain attempt to retrieve his position by going to the aid of Govinda II in his war against his younger brother Dhruva, the defeat inflicted on him by the successful Dhruva and the peace he made with Dhruva by offering him the hand of his daughter, Sīlmahādevī, have already been noted (p. 451). The subordinate relation of Veṅgī to the Rāshṭrakūṭa power continued after the reign of Dhruva under his son Govinda III, whose inscriptions affirm that the ruler of Veṅgī was ever ready to carry out his suzerain's behests with alacrity.[41]

Vishṇu-vardhana IV had three sons. Two of these, Vijayāditva II and Bhīma Saluki, quarrelled over the succession, while the third, the son of a Haihaya princess and Rudra by name, took the side of Vijayāditya. Vijayāditya II, who is credited with a reign of forty years or more (808-47), was a great warrior who bore the titles

38 Cp. 10 of 1919-20, *EI*, XVIII, p. 58.
39 *SII*, II, p. 368.
40 *EI*, VI, pp. 202-12.
41 *EI*, VI, pp. 244-45. v. 19.

narendra-mṛigarāja (lion among kings), *Chālukya-Rāma* and *vikramadhavala* (of shining valour). But his reign was full of strife and contention. He resented the hold of the Rāshṭrakūṭas over Veṅgī and they treated him as a rebel and set up his half-brother Bhīma Saluki as his rival. We have already seen (p. 456) how Bhīma Saluki contrived to rule over parts of the Veṅgī kingdom during the reign of Govinda III for about twelve years, the period during which Vijayāditya is said to have kept up a constant struggle against his enemies, and how in the early years of Govinda's youthful successor Amoghavarsha I, Vijayāditya gained the upper hand, drove Bhīma Saluki out, and obtained successes against Rāshṭrakūṭas. This round of hostilities was evidently concluded by a treaty of peace, and Vijayāditya's son Kali Vishṇu-vardhana V, so called because of his addiction to war, who assisted his father in his wars, married a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess Śīlamahādevī, most probably a cousin of Amoghavarsha from the Lāṭa branch of his family.

Vijayāditya's successor Vishṇu-vardhana V had the titles *kali* and *vishamasiddhi*. He had a short reign of less than two years and was succeeded by Vijayāditya III, the son of Śīlamahādevī, who ruled for forty-four years (848-92). He had a number of titles of which *guṇaka, guṇaga,* or *guṇakenallāta* (the lover of excellence or virtue), *parachakra-Rāma* (Rāma to the circle of his enemies), and *vallabha* are perhaps the most notable. He began his rule with an expedition against the Boya-Koṭṭams in the south. The Boyas were a race of hardy warriors who occupied the northern marches of the Pallava kingdom in the Nellore district, and offered stubborn resistance to the advance of the Chālukyas to the south. Though their country had become part of the Eastern Chālukya kingdom before the accession of Guṇaga Vijayāditya, their power was not completely broken, and the youth of the new monarch seems to have inspired them with fresh hope for their freedom. They were soon taught a lesson by Paṇḍaraṅga, the able general of Vijayāditya and son of Kaḍeyarāja who had also a distinguished record in war. The forts of Kaṭṭem and Nellore, where the rebels had gathered in strength, were taken; the former was dismantled and the latter reduced to ashes.[42] Paṇḍaraṅga evidently reached the neighbourhood of the Pulicat lake where there is a village called Paṇḍaraṅgam with a shrine dedicated to Paṇḍaraṅgeśvara.[43] Paṇḍaraṅga was made governor of the country he had subjugated with his headquarters at Kandukur, which is said to have been made as good as Vijayavāḍa. His descendants continued to rule

42 *EI*, XIX, pp. 271-77, Cp. 1 of 1913-14.
43 *NDI*, G., 86-105.

there for many years as shown by a grant of the time of Amma II Vijayāditya.[44] Paṇḍaraṅga won another victory for his master against Rāhaṇa, an enemy who remains only a name as no other reference to him has been found.

When Vijayāditya III sought to cross swords with the Rāshṭrakūṭa power, he met with a reverse. How the war started is not clear. But Vijayāditya seems to have been the aggressor. He laid waste the neighbourhood of Stambhapurī (modern Cumbum). The result was the battle of Vīṅgāvalli in which he suffered a serious reverse; he had to submit and acknowledge the suzerainty of Amoghavarsha during the rest of the latter's reign. The exact date of the battle of Vīṅgāvalli is not known, but it was fought before 860, probably round about 855.

We have seen that when Amoghavarsha was obliged by a rebellion in the north to recall his general Baṅkeśa before he had quelled the revolt of the Gaṅga Nītimārga and his ally the Nolamba Maṅgi, Vijayāditya undertook to complete the work begun by Baṅkeśa, and brought Nītimārga to obedience after destroying Maṅgi in battle. Vijayāditya's military adviser, the Brahmin Vinayaḍi Śarman, was present in the battle and appears to have had a prominent part in directing the operations which ended in the defeat and death of Maṅgi. After the death of Amoghavarsha (880), Vijayāditya III threw off the Rāshṭrakūṭa yoke, and the attempt of Kṛishṇa II to regain power in Veṅgī ended in disaster. He was defeated in battle along with his brother-in-law Saṅkila, the Chedi prince. Then came the Eastern Chālukya expedition against Ḍāhala the Chedi country, led by Paṇḍaraṅga, by way of Kalinga, Chakrkūṭa and Kosala and the burning of Kiraṇapura and Achalapura, followed by the submission of Kṛishṇa II and his temporary vassalage to the Eastern Chālukya. At the height of his glory, Guṇaga Vijayāditya assumed the title *tripura-martya-maheśvara*, i.e. the human Maheśvara to the three cities, in token of his having burnt the cities of Kiraṇapura, Achalapura and Nellūrapura.[45] The title is calculated to recall the famous legend of Tripura-dahana by Śiva.

The closing years of Guṇaga Vijayāditya's reign were uneventful. He was perhaps the greatest monarch of the Eastern Chālukya line. In Vinayaḍi Śarman and Paṇḍaraṅga he had an adviser and a general, both Brāhmins, of exceptional merit. He died in 891-2. He had no children, but a number of brothers of whom Vikramāditya, Nṛipakāma and Yuddhamalla are mentioned in inscriptions. The first, who had

44 Malayampūṇḍi grant, *EI*, IX, p. 47.
45 *ARE*, 1914, II. 6.

been *yuvarāja* for some time, died before Vijayāditya, and so his son Chālukya Bhīma I succeeded Guṇaga. But the succession was disputed by his uncle Yuddhamalla who seems to have invoked the aid of Kṛishṇa II. The Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion was successful at first, and the Vémulavāḍa ruler Baddega took Chālukya Bhīma captive. But Kusumāyudha, an ally and feudatory of Bhīma, rallied the Chālukya forces, inflicted a defeat on the Rāshṭrakūṭas and liberated Bhīma I who celebrated his coronation on April 14, A.D. 892 with Vishṇu-vardhana as his *abhisheka-nāma* and ruled for thirty years. But neither Kṛishṇa II nor the *dāyādas* who had opposed his accession were inclined to leave him in peace, and there was a second Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion under Guṇḍaya who is said to have led an army of Karṇāṭas and Lāṭas. At one of the many battles fought at places such as Niravadyapura (Niḍadavolu) and Paruvaṅgūru (Pedavaṅgūru), Chālukya Bhīma's son Iṛitmartigaṇḍa fell after having killed Guṇḍaya and dispersed his forces. The remaining years of Bhīma's reign were peaceful. He is described as having illuminated the Veṅgī country after it had suffered from the darkness of Rāshṭrakūṭa occupation. He was devoted to the worship of Śiva and built the temples of Chālukya-Bhīmavaram and Drākshārāmam in the East Godāvari district.[46] He died in 922 leaving his kingdom to Vijayāditya IV, the eldest of his surviving sons.

Vijayāditya IV, called Kollabhigaṇḍa or the slayer of heroes, led an expedition against Kaliṅga, for reasons which are not clear, and lost his life in the hard fought battle at Virajā within six months of his accession.[47] It is probable that the disaster that overtook Kollabhigaṇḍa was due to the revolt of his brother Vikramāditya II behind his back, which resulted in the defection of his forces from the field. Vikramāditya II, who came to the throne in 929-30, says that he took the kingdom from his enemies after fighting them in one hundred battles for eight years,[48] and so he must have begun the struggle in his elder brother's reign. An inscription of Amma I, son of Vijayāditya IV, also alludes to the desertion of the army of his father and grandfather and his alliance with his rebellious feudatory relatives'.[49]

Amma I succeeded his father and ruled for seven years (922-29). He was a brave prince who successfully met the revolt of his uncle and other relatives and their intrigues with Indra III Rāshṭrakūṭa. He owed his success in no small measure to the assistance of two old

46 *EI*, IV, p. 240; *JTA*, XI, p. 251.
47 *IA*, XIII, pp. 213-14.
48 *EI*, XXV, pp. 191 ff.
49 *SII*, I, p. 42.

officers who had served his father and grandfather. One of them was Mahākāla, the son of Gaumakāmbā, a foster-sister of Chālukya Bhīma I; the other Bhaṇḍanāditya also known as Kuntāditya, who had begun service under Vijayāditya IV.[50] Whether these chiefs were loyal to Amma from the first or were won over from the rebels by the inducements offered to them remains doubtful. The donee of one of Amma's records[51] was Indaparāja, son of Raṭṭiya and Govindakāmbā, and a grandson of Indaparāja of the Mahāraṭṭa family. Though he is described as the 'lord of Mānyakheta', his exact relation of the Rāshṭrakūṭa family or the circumstances which led him to seek service in the Eastern Chālukya court are not clear. The suggestion that he was a grandson of Indra III and a son of Amoghavarsha II who took shelter at the Eastern Chālukya court when that king was overthrown by Govinda IV is not likely. Amma I had the title *Rājamahendra;* the city of Rājamahendravaram (Rajahmundry) was, however, not his foundation but that of a later king who bore the same title.

Amma I was succeeded by his young son Vijayāditya V, often called Béta or Kaṇthikā-Vijayāditya. A mere lad at his succession, Béta was not fitted to rule the kingdom in that turbulent age. Within a fortnight of his coronation he was ousted from the throne and was compelled to take refuge in the fort of Piṭhāpura where he became the founder of a local dynasty.[52] Tāla, son of Yuddhamalla I, seized the kingdom probably with the help of ths Rāshṭrakūṭas. He was not, however, destined to rule long. Scarcely had a month elapsed when Vikramāditya II, who had been waging war for the throne during the past eight years, attacked him and put him to death.[53] Vikramāditya II was an energetic prince. During the brief period of eleven months (929-30) for which he ruled the kingdom, he recovered Trikaliṅga which had been lost after the death of Chālukya Bhīma I.[54] At the end of the eleven months he was killed, according to Digumarru grant,[55] the only record which alludes to the incident, by Bhīma II, a brother of Vijayāditya V. Bhīma II reigned for eight months after which he was killed in turn by Yuddhamalla II, son of Tāla I.

The success of Yuddhamalla II was in no small measure due to help from the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Govinda IV who took advantage of the

50 *EI*, V, p. 311 f; *SII*, I, p. 40.
51 Cp. 3 of 1923-24.
52 No. 492 of 1893 (*IMP*. God. 65).
53 *EI*, XXV, p. 108; IX, p. 55.
54 *SII*, I, No. 37, p. 45.
55 *IA*, XIII, p. 214.

disorders in Veṅgī to bring the kingdom under his control by ostensibly espousing the cause of Yuddhamalla. Thus though Yuddhamalla was enabled to proclaim himself king, he had in fact very little real power. A large part of the kingdom was occupied by the Rāshṭrakūṭa officers and nobles who paid no regard to his authority. Many of his relatives (*dāyādas*) who had designs upon the throne were still at large, hatching plots to compass his ruin. Though he managed to keep himself on the throne foi nearly seven years, he enjoyed no peace. On the death of Vikramāditya II, according to one inscription,[56] 'the kinsmen princes who were desirous of the kingdom, viz., Yuddhamalla, Rājamārtaṇḍa, Kaṇṭhikā-Vijayāditya etc., were fighting for supremacy and oppressing subjects like Rākshasas'. 'The feudatory Śabara chiefs, the commanders of the Vallabha (i.e., the Rāshṭrakūṭa king) and others', states another, 'apportioned the territory among themselves' and 'held it for seven years'.[57]

The country was rescued from this state of civil war and anarchy by Chālukya Bhīma II Rājamārtaṇḍa, a son of Vijayāditya IV by Melāmbā, and a half-brother of Amma I. He was helped by the dynastic revolution in the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire in which Govinda IV was deposed and Amoghavarsha II was enthroned. The Chālukyas of Vemulavāḍa and Mudugoṇḍa rose against Govinda, and Chālukya Bhīma, making common cause with them, successfully rid the Veṅgī country of Yuddhamalla II and his Rāshṭrakūṭa mercenaries. After liberating the country he celebrated his coronation in 935.[58] Though he ruled for twelve years till 946, little is known of the events of his reign. Besides the references to his fights that preceded his coronation, he is said in one grant, to have slain a number of enemies,[59] viz. 'the glorious Rājamayya and Dhalaga, who excelled far and wide, and the fierce Tāta-Bikki, and Bijja who was always ready for war, and the excessively powerful Ayyapa, terrible and savage, and the extremely great army sent by Govinda, and Lova Bikki, the ruler of the Cholas, and the valorous Yuddhamalla—(all of them) possessed of marshalled arrays of elephants.' As the first and the last names in this list are those of claimants for the throne whom Chālukya Bhīma II disposed of, it seems probable that the other fights, including one with Govinda's 'great army', were all part of the campaign for the throne, and that no new events of the reign are recorded here. Chālukya Bhīma II married two wives—Ūrjapā or Ankidevī

56 *EI*, IX, p. 55.
57 *ARE*, 1917 II. 24.
58 *EI*, XII, p. 249; IX, p. 47.
59 *EI*, VII, pp. 187-88.

of the Eastern Gaṅga family, and Lokāmbā of unknown parentage; they presented him each with a son named Dānārṇava and Amma respectively.[60]

Chālukya-Bhīma II was succeeded by his younger son Amma II Vijayāditya. Dānārṇava apparently acquiesced in the supersession, though the reason for it is not clear. Just before his coronation Amma was attacked by Yuddhamalla II,[61] but Amma repulsed him and became king (A.D. 945). A few years after his coronation he was attacked by Bādapa and Tāla II, sons of Yuddhamalla, with support from Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III. Amma had to save herself by flight, and Bādapa crowned himself king as Vijayāditya. The Eastern Chālukya records in the regular line are silent about Bādapa and Tāla II; but their own inscriptions[62] leave no doubt that they ousted Amma and ruled as kings of Veṅgī, though the area and duration of their rule cannot be ascertained definitely.

Bādapa died in the fulness of his power and was succeeded by his younger brother Tāla II Vishṇu-vardhana. Tāla's rule came to an abrupt end by the return of Amma from exile. This was rendered possible by a change in the attitude of the nobles of the Veṅgī kingdom. They had perhaps some cause of dissatisfaction with Tāla II. Nṛipakāma of Kolanu, who had given one of his daughters in marriage to Amma,[63] espoused his cause. Amma II returned and slew Tāla II in battle[64] and regained possession of his kingdom (*c.* A.D. 955). But he soon became involved in another war with the Rāshṭrakūṭas and found himself compelled once more to flee the country. Kṛishṇa III sent a strong force to back Dānārṇava, who was enthroned after the flight of Amma to Kaliṅga, perhaps Elamanchili.[65] Dānārṇava is praised as a popular ruler, but Amma found it easy to displace him soon after the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces withdrew from the country. Amma's chequered reign did not end in peace. The Penneru grant seems to suggest that Dānārṇava, who evidently never reconciled himself to the rule of his younger half-brother, once more started a movement against him with the help of Mallana and Goṇḍiya of the Mudugoṇḍa Chālukya line and others like Kāmārṇava and Vinayāditya of Kaliṅga, and even Nṛipakāma himself; the result was that

60 *JAHRS*, XI, pp. 80-88; Cp. I of 1916-17.
61 Korumelli plates, *IA*, XIV, p. 52.
62 *EI*, XIX, pp. 137, 148; Cp. 6 of 1938-39.
63 Gundu grant—*IA*, XIII, p. 249.
64 Prabhuparru plates, *JTA*, II, p. 408, where Amma is only called *dāyāda*, and not mentioned by name.
65 Cp. 1 of 1916-17.

Amma II was defeated and slain in battle (970)[66] and Dānārṇava became king.

A late record of the time of Śakti-varman II (eleventh century) has been taken to imply that the two brothers, Dānārṇava and Amma II murdered each other's son; but the text of the record though corrupt does not lend support to this view. It seems only to state that of the two sons of Rājabhīma, that is, Dānārṇava and Amma II, the younger Amma ruled the kingdom for 25 years.[67] Amma II patronised all religious sects including Jainas and Kālāmukhas.

Dānārṇava, who celebrated his coronation in Śaka 892 (A.D. 970-71),[68] had a short reign of about three years; but it was full of stirring incidents. He brought under his sway the Pottapi country extending across the Eastern Ghāts from Rājampet in Cuddapah district to Kālahasti in Chittoor district, and issued a grant from Pottapi conferring the region on the two princes of the Mudugoṇḍa Chālukya family who had assisted him in the war against Amma II. This area was, according to a copper plate bearing the date Śaka 893 (A.D. 971), in the hand of Vaidumba Bhuvana Triṇetra at the time;[69] another record of the same chieftain, found on the Cuddapah-Pushpagiri road,[70] bears a date in the succeeding Śaka year 894 (A.D. 972). The Vaidumbas were the feudatories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and Dānārṇava must have taken advantage of the weakening of the Rāshṭrakūṭa power after Kṛishṇa III to attack and conquer the Vaidumba territory in his south-eastern frontier. This possibly brought Dānārṇava into conflict with the Cholas of the Tamil country who had by that time regained their power in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, and this may have furnished the occasion for Dānārṇava's son Śakti-varman I to distinguish himself in his boyhood (*śaiśavaṁ*) in a battle with the Tamils (*dramil-āhave*),[71] But Dānārṇava had to face a more formidable foe, the Telugu-Choḍa ruler Jaṭā-Choḍa Bhīma, i.e. Bhīma, the son of Jaṭā-Choḍa. Bhīma seems to have fought against the armies of Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III as the youthful vassal of Amma II who had married his sister.[72] He improved his position considerably after the death of Kṛishṇa III, and the success of Dānārṇava against

66 Madras Govt. Or. Mss. Library (Walter Elliot's collection) 15-6-26, I, pp. 348-58. N. Venkataramanayya, *Eastern Chālukyas of Veṅgī*, App. III, pp. 311-15. For Dānārṇava's confederates—*ARE*, 1937-38, Cp. 26 and II, 12; *JAHRS*, X, p. 23.

67 1914, II; 10, N. Venkataramanayya, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

68 Kandayam plates, *JAHRS*, XI, p. 87.

69 Cp. 7 of 1935-36.

70 No. 325 of 1905 (*IMP*, Cd. 583).

71 *JTA*, II, p. 409.

72 *Svabhaginīpadam* in his Kailāsanātha epigraph, *EI*, XXI, pp. 229 ff.

Amma II and the conquest of Pottapi must have galled him greatly. Bhīma therefore started a war against Dānārṇava, killed him in battle (973), and assumed the coveted title of the Veṅgī Chālukyas, viz. *rājamakaradhvaja*. His rule in Veṅgī possibly lasted twenty-seven years and has been described in Chapter XIV. This period is designated quite correctly as an interregnum in later Chālukya records, for no Chālukya king sat upon the throne of Veṅgī during the period. Dānārṇava's sons Śakti-varman and Vimalāditya became refugees at the Chola court till the time came for their restoration to Veṅgī under the aegis of Rājarāja Chola.

Chapter Eighteen

KASHMIR

Manumental work of Kalhaṇa, the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*,[1] forms an invaluable source for the history of Kashmir, but we must endorse the observation of Stein that 'it cannot be accepted as the basis of any critical account for the period preceding the seventh century A.D.'[1a] The account and the chronology as given in Book III of the *Rājataraṅgīnī* are altogether untrustworthy, although some of the rulers mentioned in it are undoubtedly historical as confirmed by the numismatic evidence. Kalhaṇa has assigned a period of 589 years, ten months and one day to the kings of Book III. By reducing the fabulously long reign of three hundred years assigned to Raṇāditya to a normal length of twenty years, and making some other minor adjustments, the narrative in Book III may be utilised for preparing an account of the events which took place between *c.* A.D. 350 and 625. Kalhaṇa's account of the restored Gonandas undoubtedly contains echoes of the Kushāṇa and Hūṇa regimes, although the sequence of happenings has been hopelessly disturbed owing to the vagueness of his sources of information regarding these remote events. From the seventh century onward, Kalhaṇa's account becomes generally reliable.

I. THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN DOMINATION

1. *Kushāṇa rule* (A.D. 300-50)

The Purāṇic accounts of the dynasties of the early fourth century A.D. speak of the rule of the Mlechchhas in Kashmir, the Indus valley and the Chandrabhāgā.[2] But as Mlechchha is a general term applied to various barbaric tribes which invaded India, it is difficult to say which particular foreign tribe was ruling in Kashmir according to the Purāṇas. It is well known, however, that Kashmir was included in the empire of Kanishka and Huvishka. It cannot be said how long the Imperial Kushāṇas continued to hold Kashmir, but

1 The text and the English translation of this work by Sir A. Stein are abbreviated in the following notes respectively as *Raj.* and Stein.

1a Stein, Intro, p. 69.

2 Pargiter, *DKA*, p. 55.

Kushāṇa influence certainly lingered on for a long time. The type of all the subsequent Kashmir coinage, without exception, is derived from the standard Kushāṇa type. It may be that Kashmir was a dependency of the Kushāṇa king of Kabul, who is known to have given his daughter in marriage to the Sassanian emperor Hormuzd II (A.D. 303-10). Shortly after this Kashmir was conquered by the Little Kushāṇa chief Kidāra.

2. *The Little Kushāṇas* (*c.* A.D. *350-515*)

Kalhaṇa tells us (II, 145)[2a] that a prince of Kashmir named Gopāditya had taken shelter with the king of Gandhāra who wanted to conquer Kashmir. Before the kingdom could be restored to him, Gopāditya seems to have died, leaving behind a son named Meghavāhana. We are further told that the people of Kashmir, headed by the ministers, invited Meghavāhana to rule over Kashmir (II, 151; III, 2). The numismatic evidence shows that the Little Kushāṇa chief, Kidāra, annexed Kashmir (c. A.D. 350).[3] In the light of the numismatic evidence, Kalhaṇa's narrative seems to indicate that for a time the Kushāṇas were compelled to leave Kashmir and retire to the valley of the Kabul, until Kidāra became strong enough to conquer Kashmir which he ruled through a representative. The retention of Kidāra's name on the Kashmir coinage of the subsequent period, including even some of the issues of the Kārkoṭas, shows that he was a powerful ruler and was remembered long after.

Meghavāhana of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* was in all likelihood a foreigner as Kalhaṇa says that he belonged to the same race as Trikoṭihantā, i.e. Mihirakula.[4] The extensive conquests which Kalhaṇa attributes to Meghavāhana, including even an expedition to Ceylon, are purely imaginary, although this ruler in all probability is a historical personality. He and his queens built *vihāras* and *stūpas* including a monastery named *amṛitabhavana* which still existed at the time of Ou-Kong's visit in A.D. 759 and has left its name to the village of Ant-ba-van, a suburb of Śrīnagar. Meghavāhana was a devout Buddhist and is said to have prohibited the slaughter of all living beings even for sacrificial purposes.

The next king in Kalhaṇa's list is Śreshṭhasena, also called Pravarasena and Tuñjīna. He is said to have built a temple of Śiva at Purāṇādhishṭhāna—modern Pandrethan. He was succeeded by his elder son Hiraṇya, and the younger son Toramāṇa was made *yuvarāja*. Kalhaṇa's statement that Toramāṇa struck a large number

2a These figures within brackets refer to the canto and verse of *Rājataraṅgiṇī*.
3 Altekar, *NHIP*, VI. pp. 21-22. Rapson, *Indian Coins*, para 112.
4 He and his successors are accordingly regarded as Hūṇas in Ch. XXXII, § 1.

of coins and was imprisoned by his brother for this offence, is not convincing. As remarked by Stein, 'the very abundance of these coins appears to speak rather for their having been struck, by a powerful ruler than by an ill-fated pretender'. It is more likely that Toramāṇa[5] forcibly ousted his brother and seized the throne. Quite unexpected developments outside Kashmir, however, brought the reign of Toramāṇa to an abrupt end. In Gandhāra the Little Kushāṇas suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Sassanian emperor Shapur III, and in the Panjab they were attacked about this very time by Chandragupta II who pressed on beyond the Indus.[6] In a critical situation like this it must have become impossible for the Little Kushāṇas to retain their hold on Kashmir. Kalhaṇa also tells us that Kashmir became kingless about this time and the people invited Vikramāditya to save them from anarchy (III, 242). In all probability this Vikramāditya is identical with Chandragupta II whose victory over the Kushāṇas must have enabled him to extend his sway over Kashmir. Mātṛigupta, the poet, whom Vikramāditya sent to govern Kashmir,[7] was enthusiastically welcomed by the people. He was a liberal donor and a great patron of learning. The poet Bhartṛimeṇṭha, author of the lost poem *Hayagrīvavadha,* was richly rewarded by him. Mātṛigupta is assigned a short reign of four years and nine months.

According to Kalhana, Pravarasena, son of Toramāṇa, returned from abroad, conquered Trigarta, and was marching towards Kashmir when Vikramāditya died. Mātṛigupta, probably realising that resistance was futile, voluntarily abdicated in favour of the invader.

5 The Kashmir Toramāṇa, who is in all likelihood a Kushāṇa, should not be confused with his Hūṇa namesake. On the coins of the Kashmir Toramāṇa the titles Shāhi and Jāuvla, characteristic of the Hūṇa king's coinage, are absent. Moreover, on the Kashmir coins appears a goddess holding a lotus while the Hūṇa coinage bears the Śaiva symbols—the trident and the bull. Finally the occurrence of the name Kidāra, on the coins of Kashmir Toramāṇa, distinguishes him definitely from the father of Mihirakula. But Dr. Altekar is inclined to identify the two (Ch. XXXII, §1).

6 See above, p. 115.

7 Whether this Mātṛi-gupta is identical with Kālidāsa or not is difficult to determine. But as regards Vikramāditya, we may reasonably identify him with Chandra-gupta II of the Gupta dynasty. There is some error in Kalhaṇa's account according to which Vikramāditya bore the second name of Harsha. The celebrated ruler Harshavardhana is not known to have borne the title of Vikramāditya, nor was Ujjain his capital. Moreover, Harsha flourished in the first half of the seventh century when Kashmir was ruled over by the Kārkoṭas. Equally unsatisfactory is the suggestion of Hoernle that Vikramāditya is to be identified with Yaśodharman. In his two inscriptions which describe him in detail, there is no mention of his title of Vikramāditya. Moreover, his capital was Daśapura and not Ujjain.

and retired to Kāśī.[8] Kalhaṇa's account of Pravarasena can both be amplified and checked with the help of other sources of information. The extensive conquests attributed to this monarch in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* are evidently a conventional description in the manner of a Sanskrit *mahākāvya*. It is impossible to believe that Pravarasena could have conquered Surāshṭra which at this time must have been held by the Imperial Guptas. Equally unacceptable is the statement that he helped Pratāpaśīla Śīlāditya, son of Vikramāditya, to regain his lost kingdom. Stein is inclined to identify Pratāpaśīla with Śīlāditya of Mo-la-po mentioned by Hiuan Tsang as having ruled sixty years before his time i.e. *c.* A.D. 580, but that would be too late a date for Pravarasena who must have flourished before the Hūṇa occupation of Kashmir (*c.* A.D. 530).

Pravarasena's reign was quite eventful in another way. This king was a great builder and perhaps his fame in later times was due to the great architectural monuments of his reign. He founded a new city Pravarapura which Stein has identified with modern Śrīnagar still called Pravarapura 'in Paṇḍit usage'. In the new city he built several temples, the most important being a shrine of Śiva called Pravareśvara. The king's maternal uncle built a stately monastery named *Jayendra-vihāra* and installed in it a colossal image of the Buddha. It was in this very monastery—the convent of Che-ye-to-lo—that the Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang resided during his stay in Kashmir.[9] In order to protect the capital from possible inundations of the river Vitastā, Pravarasena built a huge embankment (*brihatsetu*) which still exists and is called *sutu*. The rare specimens of the gold and silver coins bearing on the obverse the king's name Pravarasena, and on the reverse a goddess holding a lotus and seated on a lion, and the legend Kidāra, written perpendicularly, belong in all probability to this monarch.[10] After a long reign of sixty years, Pravarasena was succeeded by his son Yudhishṭhira. No events of the latter's reign are recorded except the building of a number of religious edifices by the king and his ministers.

3. *The Hūṇas* (*c.* A.D. *515 to 600*)

The next ruler mentioned by Kalhaṇa, Lahkhaṇa Narendrāditya, is described by him as a son of Yudhishṭhira. Here again there is need

8 It may be questioned how Pravarasena could possibly oust Mātṛi-gupta—a protégé of the Imperial Guptas. It is probable that Chandra-gupta II Vikramāditya had died and, due to the friction between Govinda-gupta and Kumāra-gupta, the Guptas were not in a position to interfere effectively in the affairs of Kashmir. But this is merely a conjecture.

9 *Raj*, III, 355, and the *Life of Hiuan Tsang*, p. 69.

10 Cunningham, *CMI*, p. 43

to correct Kalhaṇa's narrative. As pointed out by Stein, Laḥkhaṇa is a thoroughly un-Indian name. On a silver coin of the Ephthalite type from Kashmir is found the legend *Rāja Laḥkhaṇa Udayāditya.* Another silver coin closely resembling the coin of Laḥkhaṇa, and bearing the legend *Deva Śāhi Khiṅgila,* has also unmistakable affinity with the Ephthalite type of coinage.[11] It would be quite reasonable to infer from the numismatic evidence that both these kings, whose coins have been discovered in Kashmir, belonged to the Hūṇa race. In the first book of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī,* Kalhaṇa has mentioned Mihirakula and Khiṅkhila Narendrāditya amongst the kings of Kashmir. From Kalhaṇa's account of Mihirakula it may be easily inferred that he is describing the White Hūṇa tyrant, although the date assigned is hopelessly incorrect. Kashmir had probably passed into the hands of the Hūṇa's even before the time of Mihirakula.[12] Writing about A.D. 520 the Chinese traveller Sung-Yun tells us that the Ye-tha, i.e. Hūṇa, ruler of Gandhāra 'entered on a war with the country of Ki-pin'.[13] From the foregoing discussion it may be concluded that some time in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. the Hūṇas entered Kashmir and Mihirakula, Laḥkhaṇa and Khiṅgila were amongst the notable Hūṇa rulers of this kingdom. The Hūṇa power in Kashmir seems to have been shattered by the attacks of the Maukharis of Kanauj (pp. 184-85) and the Pushyabhūtis of Thāneśvar (pp. 241-42). Rājya-vardhana's expedition against the Hūṇas mentioned in the *Harsha-charita* may be taken to have dealt the fatal blow to the Hūṇa rule in Kashmir at the beginning of the seventh century. The death of Prabhākara-vardhana and the tragic events immediately following it diverted the attention of the Pushyabhūtis to more urgent tasks, and prevented them from interfering in the politics of Kashmir for the time being. But the fate of the Hūṇas had been sealed and they finally disappeared from Kashmir.

It seems that no definite information was available to Kalhaṇa for the period immediately following the collapse of the Hūṇa power, and he has passed on to us legendary accounts mixed with some genuine historical tradition. Raṇāditya, to whom Kalhaṇa assigns a reign of three hundred years, appears like a king of the fairy land. However, he may be regarded as a historical king since other references to a temple of Raṇasvāmin are available.[14] In any case it is impossible to accept the preposterous length of his reign which must

11 Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*, pp. 97, 110; Plate VII, fig. ii, and Smith, *CCIM*.

12 *NHIP*, VI, p. 200.

13 *Ibid*, p. 195.

14 Cf. Stein's note on *Raj*, III, 453-54.

be curtailed to a normal period. Vikramāditya and Bālāditya mentioned in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* as successors of Raṇāditya, represent a reassertion of indigenous rule. Tradition seems to have preserved vague memories of the heroes who had fought for the liberation of Kashmir, and had consequently been given these illustrious titles. No events of Vikramāditya's reign have been recorded. About Bālāditya, Kalhaṇa narrates an interesting but apparently fictitious story. The king, having been told by his astrologer, that his throne would pass to his son-in-law, married his daughter to a petty clerk in order to preclude any possibility of the transfer of royal fortune from his family to that of his daughter. But the poor clerk, by his intelligence and devoted service soon raised himself in the estimation of his royal father-in-law who bestowed on him both wealth and status, and after Bālāditya's death got the throne. Shorn of romantic elements the story reveals the historical fact that an adventurous commoner, who had taken service at the court of Bālāditya, ultimately came to occupy the throne. This adventurous youth was Durlabha-vardhana, the founder of the Kārkoṭa family.

II. THE KĀRKOṬA DYNASTY (C. A.D. 625-855)

According to Kalhaṇa, Durlabha-vardhana was begotten by the Nāga Kārkoṭa and hence the dynasty founded by him was called Nāga or Kārkoṭa. This explanation of the name of the dynasty and the circumstances leading to its establishment, as described above, appear to be rather fanciful. Stein has rightly remarked that 'Kashmir tradition knew the founder of the historical Kārkoṭa dynasty as a man of humble origin, and the story of his miraculous descent was invented to explain the rise of its founder.' It is difficult to offer a definite explanation of his appellation. According to Sir Alexander Cunningham it arose from the special proclivity of this family for serpent worship.[15] Of course, Kārkoṭa is mentioned in the *Nīlamata Purāṇa* as one of the Kashmir Nāgas, and several places are associated with him. The Nāga Kārkoṭa might, therefore, have been the tutelary deity of the dynasty. Another possible explanation is that the dynasty has been named after the place of its origin. Kārkoṭanagar in Tonk District of Rajasthan was a flourishing settlement of the Mālava tribe. The influx of the Mālavas into Kashmir may be inferred from the fact that a person named Mālava figures as a minister of Bālāditya.[16] Similarly Durlabha-vardhana may have taken service at the Kashmir court. While it is difficult to assert whether he really got

15 *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 106.
16. *Raj, III*, 483.

the throne as a result of his marriage and the extinction of the male line of the earlier dynasty, there can be no doubt that he was a capable ruler. He was the first historical monarch who laid the foundations of greater Kashmir. The dynasty which he founded ruled for more than two centuries, from *c.* A.D. 625 to 855 (see Appendix I). Kalhaṇa tells us little about Durlabha-vardhana except that he built a temple of Vishṇu and granted two villages to Brāhmaṇas. But we may have some idea of his achievements from foreign sources. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang, who visited Kashmir in A.D. 631, says that 'Takshaśilā, Uraśa (modern Hazara district), Simhapur (the present Salt Range) and the hill states of Rājapurī (Rājauri) and Parṇotsa (Punch) were subject to Kashmir.'[17] It is not unlikely that these territories were conquered and brought under the suzerainty of Kashmir by Durlabha-vardhana. The southward expansion of Kashmir seems to have brought it into clash with Harsha-vardhana, the emperor of Kanauj, whose authority extended over Jālandhara. Hiuan Tsang tells us that Harsha marched up to the frontier of Kashmir to demand the surrender of a sacred tooth of the Buddha which was buried in a *stūpa* near Purāṇādhishṭhāna, the old capital of Kashmir. The incident took place some time before A.D. 643. Behind the apparently religious character of this move on the part of Harsha, there appears to have been a deeper political motive. It was impossible for Harsha to permit the ruler of Kashmir to extend his authority to the very frontier of his empire, and the demand for the relic must have served as a convenient excuse for the display of his military might.

Hiuan Tsang gives on the whole a favourable picture of the conditions prevailing in Kashmir. He was particularly impressed with the state of learning in the valley, and spent two years amongst the Kashmir savants, studying religious texts and holding discussions on points of religious doctrine.

In the Chinese annals also there is a probable reference to Durlabha. We are told that the Indian king Tu-la-pa was charged with having the envoys of Ki-Pin conveyed to their own country some time between A.D. 627 and 649.[17a] According to the chronology accepted by us, this period falls within the reign of Durlabha-vardhana.

The mixed metal coins bearing the legend *Śri Durlabha* on the obverse and *jayati Kidāra* on the reverse, belong to this monarch. Kalhaṇa has assigned to Durlabha-vardhana a reign of 36 years which came to a close in A.D. 661.

17 *HTB*, I, pp. 136, 143, 147, 164. Hiuan Tsang says that Kashmir's suzerainty over Taxila was of recent date.

17a A Remusat, *Nouveaux Melanges Asiatiques*, I, p. 212.

Durlabha-vardhana was succeeded by his son Durlabhaka, born of the queen Anaṅgalekhā. His more popular name was Pratāpāditya[18] which figures on his coins. Pratapāditya founded a town named Pratāpapura, modern Tāpar, situated between Baramula and Śrīnagar. Kalhaṇa relates a romantic story of this king's love and marriage with a lady named Narendraprabhā, the wife of a rich merchant. This queen gave birth to three sons Chandrāpīḍa Vajrāditya, Tārāpīḍa Udayāditya, and Muktāpīḍa Lalitāditya. Pratāpāditya enjoyed a long rule of fifty years. After his death, the throne passed on to his three sons in succession. The eldest, Chandrāpīḍa, ascended the throne in A.D. 711. He has been identified with king Tcheñ-t'o-lo-pi-li who, according to the annals of the T'ang dynasty, sought the aid of the Chinese Emperor against the Arabs. We are further informed by the same source that in A.D. 720 the title of king was conferred upon him by the Chinese monarch.[19] Chandrāpīḍa appears to have been a wise and capable ruler. Kalhaṇa narrates two incidents (IV, 55-109) which demonstrate his great love for justice and a keen interest in the welfare of his subjects. The religious monuments attributed to him have not been traced so far. After a rule of eight years and eight months he was put to death through witchcraft by his brother Tārāpīḍa who then ascended the throne in A.D. 720.

After his accesssion to the throne, Tārāpīḍa began to oppress those very Brahmins through whose machinations he had become king; and is said to have fallen a victim to their witchcraft after a reign of four years and twenty-four days. In A.D. 724 Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa, the youngest son of Pratāpāditya, became king. His reign was marked by unprecedented military activity. Although the account of his conquests, as given in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, cannot be regarded as wholly true and reads like the conventional descriptions of Sanskrit epic poems, some of the events are undoubtedly historical.

The sovereignty of Kashmir over the northern Panjab from the Sindhu to the Chenab, testified to by Hiuan Tsang, seems to have been maintained by the successors of Durlabha-vardhana. Lalitāditya extended his sway further towards the south-east. Kalhaṇa tells us that Jālandhara was ruled by his feudatory. The assertion of Lalitāditya's authority over the plains between the Beas and the Sutlej as well as the hill tracts of Kangra, which were included in Jālandhara,

18 Kalhaṇa (*Raj*, IV, 8) says that this name was adopted by him in accordance with the usage of the family of his maternal grandfather since he had been declared by his mother to be the latter's son. This was evidently an attempt to legitimise the new family. Cf. the note on the verse in the Eng. Translation by R. S. Pandit.

19 A. Remusat, *Nouveaux Melanges Asiatiques*, I, p. 196.

was but a prelude to an attack upon the kingdom of Kanauj. We learn from Kalhaṇa that Lalitāditya advanced to Gādhipura (modern Kanauj), the capital of king Yaśo-varman, whose history will be related later in Ch. XXI. Although Yaśo-varman was a powerful king, he proved no match for the military genius of Lalitāditya who secured an easy victory. Yaśo-varman sought for an honourable peace; but as Lalitāditya's minister in charge of Peace and War insisted on assigning a distinctly inferior status to Yaśo-varman, the negotiations fell through. In the resumed fighting, Yaśo-varman suffered a complete defeat and was deposed. Lalitāditya became the master not only of Yaśo-varman's dominions proper, but of the entire Gangetic plain from the Yamunā to south-west Bengal.[20] The rest of Kalhaṇa's account regarding the conquest of Kaliṅga, Karṇāṭa, Koṅkana, Dvārakā, Avanti, etc. is not supported by any independent evidence and appears to be based on imagination.[21]

After the successful conclusion of the Gangetic campaign, Lalitāditya turned his attention to the north of Kashmir and conquered the Tuḥkhāras (Tukhāras), Bhauṭṭas, and Darads. The Tukhāras occupied modern Badakhshān and the adjoining territory on the upper Oxus. Perhaps a Tukhāra named Chaṅkuṇa[22] became Lalitāditya's minister. The memory of this victory survived for a long time as Alberuni records 'that the Kashmiris still celebrate the victory of Muttai, i.e. Muktāpīḍa over the Turks'. The Bhauṭṭas are the Tibetans of Ladakh and the adjacent territory. The expedition against the Bhauṭṭas was perhaps necessitated by the establishment of the powerful Tibetan empire and its growing spirit of aggression towards the west. The complete success of Lalitāditya's expedition is indicated by the Chinese accounts of Muktāpīḍa's embassy which told the

20 Kalhaṇa clearly states that Yaśo-varman was entirely uprooted by Lalitāditya, Cf *samūlamudapātayat* (*Raj*, IV, 140). However, it seems that he was not put to death as we are later on told that Yaśo-varman was reduced to the position of a panegyrist of Lalitāditya's virtues (*Raj*, IV, 144). Kalhaṇa puts the extent of the conquered territory between the Yamunā and Kālikā which I take to be the Kauśikī. The junction of the Kauśikī and Aruṇā (Arun) is known as Kālikāsaṁgama. Stein, however, has identified it with Kālinadī which joins the Ganges a little below Kanauj. That the territories dependent on Kanauj, i.e. Magadha and Gauḍa, also must have come under Lalitāditya's sway seems to be proved by the incident narrated in *Raj*, IV, 323-35 and the casual reference in IV, 359.

21 The description of Kalhaṇa closely follows the model of Kālidāsa's account of Raghu's march, and in many verses the similarity is very close. Cf. *Raj*, IV, 155 with *Raghuvaṁśa*, IV, p. 42.

22 Stein thought that Chaṅkuṇa was the Sanskritized form of a Turkish name. But Sylvain Lévi pointed out that the Sanskrit name is a transcription of a Chinese title Tsiang-kiun meaning 'general', which had found its way into the Tukhāra country. See Stein's note on *Raj*, IV, 211.

Chinese about the repeated victories of the king of Kashmir over the Tibetans.[23] The Darads occupied the valley of the Kishangaṅgā, the Indus regions of Gilgit, Chilas and Bunji, and Chitral and Yasin beyond the Indus.[23a]

Another notable military success of Lalitāditya was the victory over Mummuni whose armies were defeated thrice. Mummuni has been identified with the Caliph who bore the title of Amīr-ul Mūmenīn.[24] The clash between the Arabs and Kashmir is mentioned by the Muslim historian Balādhuri who says that during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Al-mansur his Governor of Sindh conquered Kashmir and took many prisoners of war. But Indian tradition handed down to Kalhaṇa gave quite an opposite story, viz the Kashmirian monarch's repeated triumphs over the Arabs. The reverses of the Arabs in India early in the reign of Lalitāditya are admitted by Balādhuri himself.[25]

Kalhaṇa narrates with disapproval the treacherous murder of the king of Gauḍa by Lalitāditya, to which a detailed reference will be made in Ch. XXI. But it indirectly testifies to the suzerainty of Kashmir over Gauḍa.

Lalitāditya's reign is memorable not only for the glorious conquests, but also for remarkable architectural activity and works of public utility. A scheme of irrigation was initiated at Chakradhara, modern Tsakdar, below Vijbror, where a series of water-wheels were constructed for drawing up the waters of the Vitastā to be distributed to the neighbouring villages. The emperor founded a new capital named Parihāsapura, modern Paraspor, 17 miles from Śrīnagar and three miles off the Śrīnagar-Baramula road. It was his ardent wish that the new city should eclipse in beauty the old capital, Pravarapura, and he spent lavishly on the new project. Two magnificent temples of Vishṇu under the names Parihāsakeśava and Govardhanadhara, and a *vihāra,* surpassing in magnitude the great shrine of Mārtaṇḍa, were built by the king. In the Vishṇu temples images of the deities made of silver and gold, and in the *vihāra* a colossal copper image of the Buddha were installed at an enormous cost. His queens and ministers also built several temples and monasteries. Notable amongst these, was a large *stūpa* built by the Tokharian minister Chaṅkuṇa. Unfortunately, these state edifices have not escaped the ravages of time and man; but the extensive remains at

23 Cf. Chavannes and Lévi, *JA*, 1895, p. 382.

23a Cf. Stein's note on *Raj*, I, 312-16.

24 *JA*, 1895, p. 382, Stein's view on this point (Cf Stein, IV, 167, note) is not justified in view of the Arab historian Balādhuri's account of the Arab raids in India. Cf, R. C. Majumdar, 'Arab Invasion of India', *JIH*, X, Part I Supplement, pp. 40-43.

25 Cf. Ch. XIX below.

Paraspor fully bear out the statements of Kalhaṇa, and the visitor to the site can conjure up the picture of the one-time splendid capital.[26] Another architectural monument of exceptional beauty and grandeur was built by the king in honour of the sun-god at Maṭan (Mārtaṇḍa), five miles from Anantanāg. As remarked by Stein, the ruins of this temple 'command admiration both by their imposing dimensions and the beauty of their architectural design'. The king also built a monastery at Hushkapura which has been identified by Stein with the convent mentioned by Ou-Kong, the Chinese pilgrim, who reached Kashmir in A.D. 759. Kalhaṇa mentions a number of townships founded by Lalitāditya, viz. Suniśchitapura, Darpitapura, Phalapura, and Parṇotsa, but none of these places can be identified except the last which is modern Punch. But Parṇosta must have existed long before the time of Lalitāditya, as it has been mentioned by Hiuan Tsang.

It is a matter of surprise that no coins of Lalitāditya have been discovered so far.

In his old age Lalitāditya appears to have taken to drinking immoderately. Once in a state of intoxication he ordered his ministers to burn down Pravarapura. However, the clever and wise ministers satisfied the king's whim by setting fire to some distant hay-stacks and saved the city.

Lalitāditya had an insatiable ambition for conquest, and his armies were constantly on the move, even when he was advanced in years. It was probably during one of these foreign expeditions that he met his end. No definite information was available to Kalhaṇa regarding the real cause of Lalitāditya's death, and conflicting stories had been handed down. According to one source the king is said to have died in a country named Āryāṇaka, through excessive snow, which fell out of season. Another story was that, placed in a critical situation he burnt himself to death to escape ignominy; and according to a third version, he perished along with his army in Uttarāpatha.[27] It may be that he died fighting, probably against

26 For an account of the archaeological remains at Paraspor see Stein, II, pp. 300-3. and R. C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir.*

27 Stein has translated *Raj*, IV, 369 as follows: 'In the belief of some, that ruler of the earth entered, along with his army, those regions in the farthest north which are of easy access to the immortals (alone).' I would however interpret the verse differently. I take Uttarāpatha as referring to Central and Northern Panjāb (Cf *Prithūdakāt-parata Uttarāpathaḥ*) where he was evidently fighting a war as is implied by *Sakaṭakaḥ*. The sentence *amartyasulabhāṁ bhūmim-pravishṭah* only means 'ascended to the heaven' (*lit.* the land accessible to the immortals). In Sanskrit literature dying is often described as 'attaining the friendship of the gods', or 'becoming the guest of the gods'. See also *Vishveshvaranand and Iconological Journal,* III, 239-48.

the Arab armies advancing from Sindh. This would support the statement of Balādhuri, regarding the Arab victories over Kashmir.

Before his death Lalitāditya made certain arrangements to regulate the succession. He instructed the ministers that his eldest son Kuvalayāpīḍa should be his immediate successor. Next his second son Vajrāditya should be placed on the throne, and after the death of Vajrāditya, his youngest son Jayāpīḍa should be crowned king. Lalitāditya's judgment regarding the fitness of the various heirs to wield the sceptre was proved to be perfectly sound by subsequent history. Kalhaṇa assigns a reign of thirty-six years and seven months to Lalitāditya and the end of his eventful reign may be placed in A.D. 761.

In accordance with the express wish of Lalitāditya, the minister Chaṅkuṇa proclaimed Kuvalayāpīḍa as king. At first Vajrāditya, the younger son of Lalitāditya, backed by a ministerial party, created trouble and claimed a share of the royal authority, but Kuvalayāpīḍa succeeded in ousting him. However, he soon felt disgusted at the fickleness of those ministers who had supported his younger brother, and after a brief rule of one year he voluntarily retired to a life of solitude and is said to have repaired to Naimishāraṇya. The throne vacated by him was now occupied by his younger brother Vajrāditya, also called Bappiyaka. He was sensuous, cruel and avaricious. He confiscated the endowments granted by his father to the religious institutions at Parihāsapura. After a reign of seven years Bappiyaka died of consumption. He was succeeded by his son Pṛithivyāpīḍa who ruled for four years and was dethroned by his younger brother Saṁgrāmāpīḍa who died after a reign of only seven days.

Vajrāditya's youngest son Jayāpīḍa Vinayāditya, who had been marked out as a competent successor by his grandfather, ascended the throne in A.D. 773. In Kalhaṇa's account of the reign of Jayāpīḍa, fact and fiction have been mixed together and the latter predominates. But for the fact that definite historical data are available for Jayāpīḍa, one might be inclined to regard him as a mythical personality. Kalhaṇa speaks of his expeditions against Bhīmasena, king of the eastern country, but such a king is otherwise unknown so far. Similarly his account of Aramuḍi, a ruler of Nepal, reads more like a romance than sober history.[28] To the same category probably belong the descriptions of adventures in the land of the Amazons and against the Nāga Mahāpadma.

Credence may, however, be given to Kalhaṇa's statement that Jayāpīḍa organized an expedition for conquest abroad, to emulate

28 But S. Levi thinks there may be some historical truth in it. *Le Nepal*, II, p. 176.

the glorious achievements of his illustrious grandfather. He left Kashmir with a large army to win laurels in war. But misfortunes followed in his footsteps. As soon as his back was turned his brother-in-law (wife's brother) Jajja raised a rebellion and usurped the throne. As this news reached the expeditionary force, the soldiers began to desert. Undeterred by these adversities Jayāpīḍa pressed forward and reached Prayāga. Here he dismissed the remaining forces and, eager for adventure, wandered forth all alone and reached Puṇḍravardhana the modern Rajshahi division in North Bengal. It is said that an encounter with a lion, in which Jayāpīḍa slew the animal, made a deep impression on the ruler, Jayanta[29], who gave his daughter Kalyāṇadevī to the adventurous youth. Jayāpīḍa is said to have defeated the five Gauḍa chiefs and made his father-in-law a supreme ruler. He was soon joined by Mitraśarman, the son of his faithful minister Devaśarman. Having raised an army he marched back to Kashmir, defeating *en route* the ruler of Kanauj, who was in all probability Vajrāyudha. When he reached Kashmir, Jajja, the usurper, came out to oppose him. The two armies met at Sushkaletra, modern Hukhaliter, and a fierce battle raged for many days. Jajja was defeated and killed, and Jayāpīḍa regained possession of ancestral throne. To commemorate the victory, Jayāpīḍa's queen Kalyāṇadevī founded a town named Kalyāṇapura which Stein has identified with Kalanpor.

What lends far greater interest to the account of Jayāpīḍa's reign and endows his personality with a historical reality, is the remarkable literary activity of his time. Two of his ministers, Vāmana and Dāmodaragupta, were writers of repute. Vāmana is the author of the well known work on poetics—*Kāvyālaṁkārasūtravṛitti* while Dāmodaragupta wrote the *Kuṭṭanīmata*—a treatise on erotics. His court Paṇḍit Bhaṭṭa Udbhaṭa wrote the *Alaṁkārasaṁgraha,* a treatise on poetics, of considerable merit. Jayāpīḍa is said to have evinced special interest in the study of the *Mahābhāshya.* He invited an erudite scholar named Kshīra and received instruction from him. According to Kashmir literary tradition, this Kshīra is the author of the well known commentary on the *Amarakośa.* Amongst the lesser lights of his literary entourage were Manoratha, Śaṅkhadanta, Chaṭaka and Sandhimat. The king's liberal patronage of learning is said to have attracted to his court scholars from all parts of India.

Like his grandfather, Jayāpīḍa also, was greatly interested in raising

29 While V. A. Smith has doubted the historicity of Jayanta and dismissed Kalhaṇa's account as 'purely imaginary', others are inclined to identify him with Ādiśūra or Gopāla; see *EHI,* p. 387 and *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions Bengal,* pp. 309, 393.

beautiful buildings. He invited skilled engineers from all over India to build a city on the marshy ground near the Wular Lake. The new town was named Jayapura. It has been identified with Andarkoṭh near Sambal. The ruins of these ancient buildings lie scattered over an island in the Sambal lake.

Jayāpīḍa had a second name Vinayāditya. Coins of mixed metal bearing this name have been found in a large number all over Kashmir.[30]

Acting on the evil advice of officers Jayāpīḍa imposed exorbitant taxes on the people. Kalhaṇa tells us that for three successive years the entire produce of land was appropriated by the State. The lust for wealth grew so intense that he confiscated the grants made to Brahmins by previous kings. This led to a serious discontent amongst the priestly class and several Brāhmins starved themselves to death in protest. While the king was engaged in a remonstration with a Brāhmin, he received an injury which ultimately proved fatal.

Jayāpīḍa died in A.D. 804, after having reigned for thirty-one years. He had two sons both of whom ascended the throne, in succession.

The immediate successor of Jayāpīḍa was his son Lalitāpīḍa, born of the queen Durgā. He was given to a highly sensuous life, and courtesans, parasites and buffoons were his friends. He took as a concubine, a lovely maiden named Jayādevī, daughter of a spirit-distiller named Uppa. This marriage ultimately proved suicidal for the Kārkoṭa dynasty. However, in spite of his licentious habits, Lalitāpīḍa was charitably disposed, and granted three villages to Brāmaṇas. He died after a rule of twelve years, A.D. 816, and was succeeded by his step-brother Saṁgrāmāpīḍa II Pṛithivyāpīḍa, born of the queen Kalyāṇadevī, the daughter of Jayanta, king of Bengal. Of his reign of seven years no events have been recorded. He died in A.D. 823.

The throne now passed to Chippaṭa-Jayāpīḍa, son of Lalitāpīḍa and the low-born queen Jayādevī, but as he was a mere child the real power was wielded henceforth by his material uncle Padma's Utpalaka, Kalyāṇa, Mamma, and Dharma. Utpalaka assumed all the five great posts of High Chamberlain (*Mahāpratīhāra*), Chief Minister of Foreign affairs (*Mahāsāndhivigraha*), the Chief Master of the Horse (*Mahāśvaśāla*), the High Keeper of the Treasury (*Mahābhāṇḍāgāra*) and the Chief of the Army(?) (*Mahāsādhanabhāga*). The other offices of state[31] were distributed among the remaining four brothers.

30 Cunningham, *CMI*, p. 45.

31 The five great offices were created by Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa. There were, besides these, the older posts of the heads of various departments. Cf. *Raj*, IV. 141. and Stein's note.

Whatever may be said against this usurpation of power, it has to be admitted that the Utpala brothers carried on the administration efficiently and preserved peace in the land. Men of letters continued to receive proper patronage of the State. The poet Rājānaka Ratnākara wrote his *Haravijaya-Kāvya* during the rule of Chippaṭa, also called Bṛihaspati.

As Chippaṭa grew in age, his uncles, faced with the probable loss of the monopoly of power they had so long enjoyed, conspired and killed their nephew. Kalhaṇa places the event in the Laukika year 3889 (A.D. 813-14). But modern historical researches have shown that this date is impossible, and Chippaṭa's death must have taken place more than twenty years later, in *c.* A.D. 835 (see Appendix).

Having removed Chippaṭa from their path the Utpala brothers got complete control over the disposal of the crown, and placed on the throne the princes of their choice. But the unlimited power which they wielded soon created a feeling of jealousy among themselves.

Utpalaka placed on the throne Ajitāpīḍa, a grandson of Vajrāditya Bappiyaka and a son of Tribhuvanāpīḍa. Ajitāpīḍa had no authority and was only a puppet in the hands of Utpalaka. He received one-fifth of the state revenue for his maintenance, and the rest of the income was appropriated by the ministers. The ill-gotten riches however, were well spent on founding towns and building temples. Utpalaka built Utpalapura, modern Kākpor. Padma founded Padmapura, modern Pāmpar. They bestowed handsome gifts on Brāhmaṇas also. By their liberal expenditure of money, they won the good will of the people. But the mutual jealousies of the brothers had been steadily growing and ultimately culminated in an open conflict between Utpalaka and Mamma. In a fierce battle[32] the forces of Utpalaka were routed and Ajitāpīḍa was dethroned in A.D. 850-51.

After dethroning Ajitāpīḍa, Mamma crowned Anaṅgāpīḍa, a son of Saṁgrāmāpīḍa. For three years Mamma wielded unlimited power as the minister of the titular king. He was overthrown by Utpalaka's son Sukha-varman, who placed his own nominee Utpalāpīḍa, son of Ajitāpīḍa on the throne. His brief rule of two years was marked by the disintegration of the empire. The rulers of the dependencies like Parṇotsa and Dārvābhisāra threw off the yoke. The authority of Kashmir was now confined to the valley of Vitastā only.

The fortunes of the Kārkoṭas were waning rapidly. The minister Sukha-varman was himself aspiring to the royal position. His ambition remained unrealised as he was killed by a relative. Śūra, a

32 An account of this battle was given by the poet Śaṅkuka in his poem *Bhuvanābhyudaya*. Śaṅkuka's views on *rasa* have been quoted by Mammaṭa in the fourth *ullāsa* of the *Kāvyaprakāśa*.

minister and a partisan of Sukha-varman, deposed Utpalāpīḍa and placed Sukha-varman's son Avanti-varman on the throne. Thus came to an end the line of the Kārkoṭas, after a rule of a little more than two centuries and a quarter.

III. THE LINE OF UTPALA (A.D. 855 to 939)

The *coup d'etat* of the minister Śūra, which put an end to the tottering Kārkoṭa dynasty, ushered in a period of strong and stable rule under the descendants of Uppa, the distiller, the father of Jayādevī, the concubine of Lalitāpīḍa. The new king, Avanti-varman, whom Śūra placed on the throne in A.D. 855-56, was the great-grandson of Uppa, grandson of Utpalaka, and son of Sukha-varman. While Avanti-varman treated Śūra with great respect, the latter served his master with unflinching devotion. Kalhaṇa tells us how Śūra gave practical proof of his loyalty when he cut off the head of his favourite Ḍāmara, Dhanva, who had incurred the displeasure of Avanti-varman by misappropriating the villages granted to the temple of Bhūteśvara.

The first act of Avanti-varman after his accession was the distribution in charity of the entire wealth in the treasury. This was obviously designed to win public goodwill which undoubtedly he secured, in ample measure. Many of his collaterals (i.e. agnates), however, broke into revolt, but were defeated. In spite of it Avanti-varman treated his relatives with kindness, and appointed his half-brother Śūra-varman as *yuvarāja*.

Having put down all opposition and established himself firmly, Avanti-varman inaugurated a programme of internal consolidation of his kingdom which had suffered badly by the political strife and was threatened with economic collapse on account of poor production. He eschewed all temptations of the glory of foreign conquests, and did not even attempt to assert his sovereignty over the adjacent states like Dārvābhisāra which had become independent during the last days of the Kārkoṭas. The problem of food production was very acute; and required immediate attention. Frequent floods in the Vitastā resulted in damage to the rice crops and large tracts of land had become water-logged and hence unfit for cultivation. These were the main causes of scarcity.

Avanti-varman was fortunate in getting the services of a skilled and intelligent engineer Suyya, and placed large funds at his disposal. Having carried out a survey of the whole course of the Vitastā, Suyya discovered with remarkable ingenuity that the floods were caused by obstruction in the bed of the river. Experimental dredging was commenced at Yakshadara, about three miles below Baramula. It was

noticed that huge rocks had rolled down into the bed of the river and obstructed its current. As the rocks were cleared out, water flowed forth swiftly. The experiment being successful, Suyya proceeded with his plans. A dam was thrown across the river and the dried-up bed was thoroughly cleared. Stone walls were constructed along the banks to prevent any further rolling down of the rocks. The river now flowed unobstructed, and villages along its course were relieved of floods. 'Wherever innundation-breaches were known to have occurred new beds were constructed' (v. 95). Suyya next took up the work of reclaiming extensive tracts of land in the neighbourhood of Parihāsapura. The Vitastā, which used to flow to the south of Trigrāmī, quite close to Parihāsapura, was diverted to the north, and its confluence with the Sindhu was shifted from the vicinity of Trigrāmī to its present position near Shadipur. The course of the united streams from the confluence up to the Volur lake was further controlled by constructing stone embankments for a distance of 45 miles and the danger of flood owing to any overflow of the rivers or the lake was altogether removed. On the land thus reclaimed numerous villages grew up. As these were protected by special dykes of a circular shape they were called Kuṇḍalaṣ.[33]

Another step taken towards increasing production was the provision of irrigation facilities. Suyya carried out researches in the soil in order to determine the water requirements of various types of land, and arranged, on a permanent basis, the size and distribution of the water-courses for each village, by harnessing the waters of the various streams. As a result of Suyya's drainage and irrigation schemes, scarcity was converted into plenty, and the price of rice, the staple food of the people of Kashmir, was reduced to less than one-fifth of its previous price even in normal times. The name of this great benefactor of Kashmir is preserved in the modern town of Sopor (Suyyapura), which he founded at the point where the Jhelum leaves the Wular.

The economic prosperity, combined with political tranquillity, created conditions favourable for progress in art and literature, and there was marked activity in both these spheres. Amongst the notable writers in Sanskrit literature who received Avanti-varman's patronage we can count the famous literary critic Ānanda-vardhana, the author of *Dhvanyāloka*, Śivasvāmin, the writer of the Buddhist epic poem *Kapphiṇābhyudaya*, Rājānaka Ratnākara, who had finished his *Haravijaya-kāvya* during the reign of Bṛihaspati, and the poet Muktākaṇa.

33 The names of villages Utsakuṇḍal and Marakuṇḍal, situated on the left bank of the Vitastā, bear testimony to the truth of Kalhaṇa's statement (Stein, IV, 106, note).

Avanti-varman founded a new city, named Avantipura, modern Vantipur, 8 miles from Śrīnagar. The chief edifices of the new city were a temple of Vishṇu-Avantisvāmin, and another of Śiva-Avantīśvara.[34] His minister Śūra built the town of Śūrapura, modern Hurapur, a watch station on one of the passes in the Pir Pantsal range. Kalhaṇa records several other benefactions by the king and his nobles. Avanti-varman's reign was the golden age in the history of Kashmir, and one may readily agree with Kalhaṇa's opinion that Avanti-varman had brought back the kṛita age (v. 122).

Avanti-varman died in A.D. 883 at the temple of Jyeshṭheśvara, listening to a recitation of the *Bhāgavadgītā.* Before he breathed his last he told his minister Śūra, that he had been a devout Vaishṇava throughout his life, though, out of regard for his minister's feelings, he had professed to be a Śaiva.

Avanti-varman left a son named Śaṅkara-varman, but the succession was contested by his younger uncle Samara-varman, and his cousin Sukha-varman, son of Sūra-varman, another brother of Avanti-varman. However, the power and influence of the chamberlain Ratnavardhana[35] secured the throne for Śaṅkara-varman. Sukha-varman who was backed up by another minister, Karṇapa, was made *yuvarāja.* The compromise, however, did not work smoothly. There was a constant tussle between the king and the *yuvarāja,* which ultimately culminated in open hostility. In the war that followed Śaṅkara-varman overthrew both the *yuvarāja* and Samara-varman.

Having put down the rebellious elements at home, Śaṅkara-varman set out for conquests abroad. With a huge force (more than ten lakhs according to Kalhaṇa), he crossed 'the gate', one of the passes in the Pir Pantsal range, and descended upon the kingdom of Dārvābhisāra. Its ruler, Naravāhana did not offer resistance and fled away.[36] Some-

34 For the archaeological remains of Avantipura, see
(a) Sein's note on V, 45-46, Eng. trans, I.
(b) D. R. Sahni, *ASIAR,* 1912.
(c) R. C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir,* pp. 118-125.

35 K. M. Munshi takes the word Pratihāra occurring in *Raj,* V, 128, as a dynastic appellation and not the name of an Office (Chamberlain). According to him, Ratnavardhana was a member of the Gurjara-Pratihāra dynasty of Kanauj (vide *Imperial Gurjaras,* p. 86). But this view is hardly tenable. That Ratna-vardhana was a minister is clearly stated in *Raj,* V. 163. Moreover, had Śaṅkara-varman owed his throne to the Pratihāra intervention, his attitude towards the Gurjara protégés in the Panjab would have been different. We cannot expect him to interfere with the sovereignty of the power to the successful intervention of which he owed his throne.

36 The name of the ruler is given in v. 209. Kalhaṇa tells us that Śaṅkara-varman treacherously murdered Naravāhana, when he was living at the Kashmir court.

where in this region Śaṅkara-varman defeated and captured a certain Harigaṇa who appears to have been the ruler of a small principality dependent on Dārvābhisāra.

The ruler of Trigarta (Kangra), Pṛithivīchandra, is said to have come out to pay homage to the invader, but being apprehensive of maltreatment, he retired to a place of safety. Kalhaṇa does not tell us whether Śaṅkara-varman took any steps to punish the recalcitrant ruler of the hills. His silence indicates that in all probability the Kashmirian invader did not pursue the matter as his hands were full.

The main target of his attack was Alakhāna,[37] the king of Gūrjara, whose authority extended over the Panjab plains immediately to the south of Dārvābhisāra, and extended from the river Jhelum up to the Ravi. Alakhāna gave battle, but was defeated, and had to cede the Ṭakka region, i.e. the territory between the Chenab and the Ravi comprising the modern districts of Gujranwala and Sialkot.

The historical reference in the statement of Kalhaṇa that 'he caused the sovereign power, which the emperor Bhoja had taken away, to be conferred on the scion of the Thakkiya family who had taken up service as a chamberlain' (v. 151), does not admit of a clear interpretation. The *adhirāja* Bhoja is undoubtedly the Pratihāra monarch of Kanauj whose sovereignty extended over the Southern Panjab. But it is difficult to ascertain in which part of the Panjab the Pratihāras were compelled to give up their claim to sovereignty, unless it may be the Ṭakka country which Alakhāna had ceded. This point will be further discussed in Ch. XXII.

We are informed by Kalhaṇa that Śaṅkara-varman desired to subdue, Alakhāna's supporter, Lalliya Shahi,[38] the powerful ruler of Udabhāṇḍa but was not successful in his design. Śaṅkara-varman's failure to subdue the Shahi is indicated by the following words of Kalhaṇa: 'The illustrious Lalliya Shahi was not received into service by (Śaṅkara-varman) who desired to remove him from his sovereign position'. After these exploits Śaṅkara-varman returned to Kashmir. His military expedition had met with only partial success.

Śaṅkara-varman founded a city named after himself, but subsequently known simply as Pattana, modern Paṭan, 17 miles below Śrīnagar. In order to beautify the new city, Śaṅkara-varman removed

37 The name is undoubtedly foreign, but it is certainly non-Muslim. Names ending in Khān were borne by the Mongol Chiefs in the medieval age, for example Halaku Khān and Chingiz Khān, who were not Muslims. The view of K. M. Munshi, that Alakhāna was a Viceroy of Bhoja Ādivarāha, lacks positive evidence.

38 For Lalliya Shāhi, Cf. Ch. XXVI, Section IV.

from Parihāsapura 'whatever was of value'. The notable monuments in Pattana were a pair of temples of Śiva, one named after the king and the other after his queen Sugandhā. The minister Ratna-vardhana also built a temple of Śiva.

Śaṅkara-varman had become addicted to vices, and this was a further drain on the treasury which had already been depleted by foreign wars. The king adopted unscrupulous ways for replenishing the treasury and resorted to oppressive taxation. The temples were the first victims of the avarice of the king, who did not hesitate to adopt even fraudulent methods. Sixty-four of these sacred institutions were plundered through officers appointed to supervise the spoliation. The endowments of others were taken over on fixed compensation to be paid from the income of their endowments. Taxes were imposed on the sale of materials of worship at the temples. Śaṅkara-varman introduced the accursed practice of exacting forced labour for purposes of transport. The slightest dereliction in this respect was punished with the heaviest fines. The villagers were further required to contribute towards the monthly salaries of the village officials, and two new departments of taxation were created. Kalhaṇa records with indignation that the people were groaning under the iron heel of the revenue collectors. The only voice of protest against this tyrannous rapacity was raised by the young prince Gopāla-varman, the heir to the throne; but it had no effect on the king's mind.

According to Kalhaṇa, Śaṅkara-varman was not a man of culture or taste. He liked the company of buffoons instead of scholars and poets, and spoke *apabhraṁśa* to the exclusion of Sanskrit. He did not patronise learned men, and brilliant writers like Bhallaṭa had to pass their days in poverty.

The last days of Śaṅkara-varman's reign were quite unhappy. Twenty or thirty of his children died, and there was trouble on the frontiers. His *dvārādhipa* (Warden of the Marches) was murdered at Vīrānaka, a frontier post below Baramula. The king marched out to punish the miscreants and Vīrānaka was destroyed. Śaṅkara-varman proceeded further up the river Indus, and reduced the hilly tracts along its course. While returning from this expedition through Uraśā (modern Hazara district), the king was involved in a skirmish with the people of the hills, and was fatally wounded by an arrow discharged by a *śvapāka* (a chaṇḍāla) and lost his life in A.D. 902. The ministers kept the king's death a closely guarded secret, until the army had safely reached Bolyāsaka, modern Bulias, on the right bank of the Vitastā. The king's funeral rites were performed at this frontier

town. Before his death he entrusted his son Gopāla-varman to the care of his favourite queen Sugandhā and the ministers.[39]

Copper coins of Śaṅkara-varman, of the usual Kushāṇa type—standing king on the obverse and a seated goddess on the reverse—are commonly found in Kashmir, and from this time onward we have an uninterrupted series of the Kashmir coinage up to the close of our period.

In A.D. 902 Śaṅkara-varman's minor son Gopāla-varman was proclaimed king under the regency of Sugandhā. The widowed queen developed intimacy with the minister Prabhākaradeva who was put in charge of the treasury. He invaded the Shāhi kingdom of Udabhāṇḍa, and having deposed the reigning monarch, placed Toramāṇa, son of Lalliya, on the throne. Kalhaṇa does not mention the name of the deposed Shāhi ruler. According to Stein, he was, in all likelihood, Sāmantadeva. After this success, Prabhākaradeva's power and influence were still further enhanced. The young king now felt it imperative to place some check on the minister, and asked him to render accounts of the treasury which was getting empty. Prabhākaradeva offered the false excuse that the money had been spent on the expedition against the Shāhi. Ultimately, the exasperated minister contrived to kill the king by foul means in A.D. 904. Copper coins of Gopāla-varman have been found.

Gopāla-varman having died issueless Saṅkaṭa-varman, another son of Śaṅkara-varman, whose royal descent was, however, questionable, was proclaimed king. He died after ten days.

As there was no other male descendant in the direct line of Avanti-varman, Sugandhā herself assumed control of the adminis-

39 The sketch of the reign of Śaṅkara-varman is of course based on *Raj*. But one might suspect that Kalhaṇa was biased against Śaṅkara-varman, evidently for his pillaging the temples and omitting to patronize learned men. Kalhaṇa, who generally gives lurid details of the vices of kings, fails to give any detail so far as this king is concerned. Śaṅkara-varman was brought up by his father like a commoner. On his accession he probably found the treasury depleted, for his father Avanti-varman began his reign by distributing the entire treasury, probably in order to make himself popular (v. 18). Large sums of money were also spent by Avanti-varman in irrigation projects. When, therefore, Śaṅkara-varman had spent a large sum of money in fruitless military expeditions, the necessity of replenishing his treasury forced him to take the steps which Kalhaṇa so strongly condemns. Evidently, however, the king put to very good use the lands reclaimed from the temples; 'Having resumed the villages in the possession of the temples, by compensation he himself made the land yield produce like a cultivator' (v. 170). If Śaṅkara-varman increased the yield of the land, his resumption of the same from indolent priests against compensation might not have been unjustified. Another charge against Śaṅkara-varman is his tampering with weights and measures, but he advanced some good excuses (?) for this according to v. 171. Unless he introduced a reform in weights, this must have had grave economic results (Ed.).

tration. This period witnessed the rise of powerful factions which dominated the politics of Kashmir for a long time. *Tantrins*, a body of foot-soldiers, had formed a strong union and were in a position to make or unmake kings. Another influential organisation was that of the *Ekāṅgas*—a body of soldiers performing the duties of royal bodyguaids.[40]

Sugandhā had pinned hei hope on a male heir being born to the widow of Gopāla-varman, but the child died soon after its birth. She now attempted to place one of her own relatives on the throne, but did not succeed in her design. With the support of the *Ekāṅgas,* and the goodwill of the *Tantrins,* she managed to rule for two years (904-6).

A further attempt of the queen to regulate the succession resulted in her own fall. She convened a meeting of the ministers, feudatories, *Tantrins* and the *Ekāṅgas,* and proposed to crown Nirjita-varman, nicknamed Paṅgu, a grandson of Avanti-varman's half-brother Śūra-varman. The *Tantrins* opposed this arrangement, and compelled the queen to relinquish her authority. Deserted by her followers, she considered resistance futile and retired to Hushkapura. The *Tantrins* crowned Pārtha, the ten-year old son of Paṅgu, under the regency of his father. For the next fifteen years (A.D. 906-21), the *Tantrins* held virtual control of the administration.

In A.D. 914 the *Ekāṅgas* made an attempt to restore Sugandhā. But the *Tantrins* were determined to keep her out. They inflicted a defeat on the *Ekāṅgas* as they were on their way to the capital. Sugandhā was captured and died in prison.

Pārtha was only a titular ruler. The *Tantrins* wielded real power, and the king was at their mercy. The administration became thoroughly corrupt, and the ministers and the officers were busy plundering the state. To add to the misery of the unfortunate subjects, a disastrous flood destroyed the entire autumn crop in A.D. 917, and there was a terrible famine. The price of rice whch had come down to 36 dinārs in the reign of Avanti-varman, rose to 1,000 *dinars* per *khari.* While the people were dying in thousands for want of food, the ministers and the *Tantrins* amassed wealth by selling their accumulated stores at fabulous prices.

The life in the palace was scandalous. The wives of Paṅgu, the regent, developed illicit intimacy with the youthful minister Sugandhāditya, in order to secure the throne for their respective

40 For details see Stein's note on *Raj,* V, 248-49.

offspring. Paṅgu himself was intriguing against his own son and paid rich bribes to the *Tantrins*. In A.D. 921, the *Tantrins* dethroned Pārtha, and crowned Paṅgu as king.

After a reign of two years (A.D. 921-23) Paṅgu died. Before his death he had anointed his infant son Chakra-varman born of the queen Bappaṭadevī. An attempt on the part of the *Tantrins* to bring back Pārtha failed, as they were defeated by the *Ekāṅgas*. Chakra-varman retained the crown for ten years, A.D. 923-33. In A.D. 933-34 he was dethroned by the *Tantrins* who put Śūra-varman (I), a son of Paṅgu born from Mṛigāvatī, on the throne. Śūra-varman, too, was dethroned after a year, as he could not meet the exorbitant demands of the *Tantrins.*

The *Tantrins now* restored Pārtha, who enjoyed the kingdom for one year (A.D. 934-35) mainly through the cleverness of his mistress Sāṁbavatī who kept the *Tantrins* conciliated.

In A.D. 935, Chakra-varman once again became king by offering rich presents to the *Tantrins*. But before the year was out, Chakra-varman, being unable to meet the demands of the *Tantrins,* fled to Maḍavarājya (Maraz).

The *Tantrins* now raised the minister Saṁbhu-vardhana to the throne. The exiled monarch Chakra-varman sought the assistance of a powerful *Ḍāmara,*[41] Saṅgrama, and collecting a host of fierce *Ḍāmaras,* marched on the capital. In the spring of A.D. 936 a terrible battle was fought near Padmapura, modern Pamapor, between the *Ḍāmaras* and the *Tantrins,* in which Chakra-varman displayed great valour. He spurred on his steed and slew the *Tantrin* leader Śaṅkara-vardhana. At the death of their leader the *Tantrins* lost courage and fled. They were pursued and killed in thousands. Śaṁbhu-vardhana was taken prisoner and beheaded.

Chakra-varman became king for the third time in A.D. 936. However, he did not make a good use of the power which this victory had placed into his hands. He fell on evil ways and became infatuated with the charms of two dancing girls, Haṁsī and Nāgalatā, born in the untouchable caste of the Ḍombas. Haṁsī was made the chief queen. The low-born relatives of the queen were appointed to high

41 *Ḍāmaras* were a class of powerful and turbulent landed aristocracy. We hear of them first in the reign of Avantivarman (p. 539). Gradually they gained more and more power, and by the time of Queen Diddā they had become a potential source of danger. For further details see Stein, (Eng. trans) II, note 6, pp. 304-8. B. P. Mazumdar, *PIHC* IX, pp. 191-99.

administrative offices and received rich gifts from the king. Kalhaṇa narrates an amusing incident regarding Raṅga, the father of these girls, who was granted a village. He went to the officer-in-charge of grants and haughtily reprimanded him for delay in preparing the charters. This state of affairs roused the indignation of the *Ḍāmaras*, as the king now showed scant courtesy to them and even got some of them treacherously murdered. One night in the summer of A.D. 937 some rebellious *Ḍāmaras* entered the palace and killed Chakra-varman.

The ministers now anointed Unmattāvanti, son of Pārtha. By acts of wanton cruelty and perverted taste, the ruler proved that he was really true to his name. Persons who were experts in clown's tricks became his ministers. Parva-gupta, who danced in the royal assembly with his loin-cloth taken off, was most dear to the king. At the instigation of this wicked minister, who was aspiring to the throne, Unmattāvanti exterminated the royal line. He put his infant brothers into prison and caused their death by slow starvation. He confiscated the entire property of his father Pārtha and set assassins upon him. While Pārtha was passing his days in the Jayendra-*vihāra*, the *Ekāṅgas*, *Tantrins*, feudatories and ministers, at the king's behest, attacked and killed him. The land was spared further misfortunes, as Unmattāvanti died of consumption in A.D. 939. Before his death, Unmattāvanti had crowned his supposititious son Śūra-varman (II) and entrusted him to the care of the ministers, *sāmantas, Tantrins* and *Ekāṅgas*. On hearing of the king's death, the commander-in-chief (*Kampanādhipati*) Kamala-vardhana, who was staying in Madava-rājya, marched on the capital, defeated the *Ekāṅgas* and the *Tantrins*, and entered the palace, and put an end to the rule of the Utpala dynasty.

IV. THE HOUSE OF VIRADEVA (939-49)

Although Kamala-vardhana was in a position to occupy the vacant throne, he preferred to leave it to the Brāhmins to select a suitable ruler for the land, thinking that their choice would eventually fall on him. The Brāhmins debated the matter for several days, and ultimately decided to offer the crown to Yaśaskaradeva, a Brāhmin famous for learning and eloquence. This is almost a unique event in the recorded history of India.

Yaśaskaradeva's great-grandfather Vīradeva was a commoner from the village named Piśāchakapura. His grandfather Kāmadeva had served as a tutor to the sons of Meru-vardhana, a minister of Pārtha, and had subsequently risen to the position of a treasurer. His father

Prabhākaradeva wielded great authority as the treasurer of Śaṅkaravarman. On the rise of the *Tantrins* he had been ousted from power and since then the family had been reduced to rather straitened circumstances, so much so that Yaśaskaradeva had to leave Kashmir in search of livelihood. He had just returned from abroad with a reputation for great learning and was elected by the Brāhmins to occupy the vacant throne.

Yaśaskaradeva proved a happy choice. He firmly put down all turbulent elements and established peace and order in the country. He was charitable. He established a lodging for students coming to Kashmir from Āryadeśa; and granted fifty-five villages to Brāhmins. He was remembered long afterwards for his keenness to do justice. But even this good ruler had some weakness. He was passionately attached to a courtesan, Lallā, who proved unfaithful. Kalhaṇa further censures him for conniving at the love intrigue between some of his queens and a governor.

When Yaśaskara became seriously ill he nominated Varṇaṭa, son of his paternal grand-uncle Rāmadeva, to succeed him and passed over his own infant son Saṁgrāmadeva as he did not believe that he was really his son. But Varṇaṭa offended the king by his indifference and the minister Parva-gupta induced Yaśaskaradeva to bestow the crown on Saṁgrāmadeva. The king now retired to the *maṭha* he had established for the students, where he died in A.D. 948.

Saṁgrāmadeva, nicknamed Vakrāṅghri (crooked foot), was installed on the throne under the guardianship of his grandmother and a council of five ministers. But Parva-gupta, who had an eye on the throne since the days of Unmattāvanti, ousted all others including the king's grandmother and established himself in the palace as the sole master. He pretended to be greatly devoted to the infant king, but was only looking for an opportune moment to overthrow him. On a wintry night in the year A.D. 949, during a heavy snowfall when the people were keeping indoors, he surrounded the palace with his troops. After slaying the faithful minister Rāma-vardhana, he killed Saṁgrāmadeva and threw his dead body into the river. The ministers, *Ekāṅgas,* and *Tantrins* were all afraid of Parva-gupta and there was no opposition to his accession. The shortlived house of Vīradeva thus gave place to another ministerial family.

V. THE HOUSE OF ABHINAVA (A.D. 949-1003)

Parva-gupta, who thus usurped the throne, was the grandson of a clerk named Abhinava, and son of Saṅgrāma-gupta, of whom nothing is known.

Parva-gupta enjoyed the ill-gotten throne only for a year and a half. During this period he oppressed the subjects by imposing heavy taxes. He died in A.D. 950, and was succeeded by his son Kshema-gupta.'

Kshema-gupta was a young man of most dissolute character and led a life of reckless indulgence in wine, women, and dice. The only recorded event of his reign is the destruction of the ancient Buddhist monastery called Jayendra-*vihāra*.[42] A *Ḍāmara* named Saṁgrāma, who had incurred the king's displeasure, had taken shelter in this monastery, and in order to kill him, the monastery was burnt down by the king's orders.

Kshema-gupta's marriage with Diddā, daughter of Siṁharāja, ruler of Lohara,[43] forms a landmark in the history of Kashmir. As a result of this matrimonial alliance the rule of Kashmir eventually passed into the hands of the Lohara rulers who held it for about two centuries. Kshema-gupta's extreme fondness for his queen has been commemorated by means of coins[44] which bear her name besides his own. Kalhaṇa also tells us that the king got the humiliating appellation of Diddākshema. Another queen of Kshema-gupta was Chandralekhā, daughter of Phalguṇa, 'the lord of the Gate'.

In A.D. 958 Kshema-gupta died of the fatal disease *lūtā* which he contracted during a jackal hunt, and his infant son Abhimanyu was proclaimed king under the regency of his mother Diddā. The history of Kashmir for the next half a century is the history of Diddā's capricious likes and dislikes of her ministers, and frequent rebellions sponsored by the dislodged councillors. Phalguṇa, who was originally 'the lord of the Gate', had risen to the position of Chief Minister during the lifetime of Kshema-gupta. Diddā was jealous of him because of his daughter Chandralekhā's marriage with Kshema-gupta. An evil-minded courtier named Rakka, further poisoned the queen's mind by the insinuation that Phalguṇa was himself aspiring to the throne. Apprehending maltreatment from the queen, Phalguna left the capital and repaired to Varāhakshetra

The queen, who was ever alert, discovered that Mahiman and Pāṭala, the sons of Parva-gupta's daughters, who had been brought

42 This monastery had been built during the reign of Pravarasena, see p. 527 above. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang stayed here.

43 It has been identified with the Loharin Valley.

44 Copper-coins bearing the letters 'di Kshema' are very common. Cf. *CMI*, p. 45, Plate IV.

up in the royal palace, were conspiring for the throne, and turned them out. Mahiman raised a revolt with the support of the Brāhmins of Lalitādityapura and marched on the capital. Diddā, however, proved too clever for the rebels, and caused a split in their ranks by bribing the Brāhmin supporters. The rebellion fizzled out, and Mahiman was put to death. One of the rebel leaders, Yaśodhara who had joined the queen, was appointed commander-in-chief.

Yaśodhara led an expedition against Shāhi Thakkana, the ruler of some neighbouring hill state, and after defeating him restored him to the throne on his undertaking to pay tribute. The wicked Rakka instigated the queen against the commander-in-chief by telling her that he had taken a huge bribe from the Shāhi. Yaśodhara lost the queen's confidence and she sent her men to banish him. The partisans of the commander-in-chief revolted, and even some of the royal troops went over to the rebels. The queen was besieged in the palace, but the rebels did not act swiftly. Some of the devoted ministers, particularly Naravāhana, rallied the royal forces. The rebels were routed in a battle and their leaders were either killed in action or taken prisoner. The queen's power and prestige were completely restored.

Naravāhana now became the Chief Minister and the recipient of Diddā's favours. She bestowed on him the title of *Rājānaka*. But soon the fickle-minded queen became suspicious of him, and in disgust the faithful minister committed suicide.

An attempt to crush the sons of the *Ḍāmara* Saṁgrāma created a rather difficult situation for the queen, and though she cleverly avoided an open clash, she felt uneasy. In order to cope with the *Ḍāmara* trouble, she recalled the old Prime Minister Phalguna.

In A.D. 972 the young Abhimanyu died of consumption and his son Nandi-gupta was anointed king. The death of her son was a great shock to the widowed queen and the intensity of grief diverted her thoughts towards acts of piety. She founded as many as sixty-four religious establishments, and repaired all old and dilapidated temples. Amongst her notable foundations were a temple of Vishṇu, under the name Diddāsvāmin, and a *maṭha*[45] for visitors from other parts of India like Madhyadeśa, Lāṭa and Saurāshṭra. She founded a town named Kaṅkaṇapura, modern Kangan, on the river Sindh, in memory of her husband. But this enthusiasm for piety soon cooled down,

45 According to Stein, the name of this institution has survived in Didamar, a quarter of Srinagar situated between the sixth and seventh bridges.

and the queen reverted to her old ways. In her lust for power she had her little grandson, Nandi-gupta, murdered in A.D. 973. Another grandson, Tribhuvana, was put to death after being kept on the throne for two years (A.D. 973-75). Her youngest and last grandson Bhīma-gupta was crowned in A.D. 975. At this time the old Prime Minister Phalguṇa died, and whatever restraining influence he had exercised on the queen was now removed. She became still more reckless in her ways and led a most licentious and scandalous life. Tuṅga, a Khaśa from Punch who had taken service at the Kashmir court as a letter-carrier in the Foreign Office, attracted the fancy of the lustful queen who became passionately attached to this youth of humble origin. As Bhīma-gupta grew up in years he showed concern at the vicious conduct of his grandmother. The passionate queen at once put him into prison where he died of torture in A.D. 980.

Now, Diddā herself ascended the throne, rendered vacant through her cruel devices. She raised Tuṅga to the position of the Chief Minister (*Sarvādhikārī*), and he held that post throughout the 23 years' rule of Diddā.

Kardamarāja, son of Phalguṇa, and other displaced ministers raised a revolt under the leadership of Vigraharāja, a nephew of Diddā. The rebels induced the Brāhmins to start a fast unto death, and this excited popular indignation against the queen. Diddā, however, succeeded in winning over some of the Brāhmins through bribes, and Vigraharāja finding his strength dwindling retired. The other rebel leaders were captured and put to death.

A conflict with the ruler of Rājapurī, Pṛithvīpāla, afforded an opportunity for Tuṅga to display his valour. As Pṛithvīpāla had shown arrogance, it was decided to punish him. An expeditionary force sent under the ministers Śipāṭaka and Haṁsarāja met with a complete disaster. The situation was retrieved by Tuṅga who swiftly descended upon Rājapurī by a side track and burnt the city. Pṛithvīpāla submitted and agreed to pay tribute. It was a great personal triumph for Tuṅga whose power and prestige now stood higher than ever. On his return to Śrīnagar he was put in charge of the army. A rising of the *Ḍāmara* chiefs was quelled by Tuṅga with equal courage and agility.

Diddā, who now enjoyed absolute power, appointed her nephew Saṁgrāmarāja, son of her brother Udayarāja, ruler of Lohara, as *yuvarāja*. When Diddā died in A.D. 1003, he ascended the throne

Thus the sovereignty of Kashmir was peacefully transferred to the Lohara dynasty.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY

The scheme of chronology adopted in this chapter requires some explanation. In the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* precise dates for the accession of kings begin to be recorded from the commencement of the reign of Avanti-varman, the first member of the house of Utpala. For all subsequent reigns we have precise dates recorded in the Laukika era, but, for the preceding period, Kalhaṇa only records the lengths of reigns, and the date of each king to be computed by calculating backwards from a fixed date. Moreover, as Kalhaṇa's narrative covers a very long period, the information regarding the lengths of reign for the very remote periods could not be absolutely definite and correct. As will be seen below corrections have to be made here and there.

1. *The Kārkoṭa Period*

The earliest date recorded by Kalhaṇa for the accession of a king is the Laukika year 3931, A.D. 855-56, when Avanti-varman ascended the throne. Previous to this, Kalhaṇa mentions two dates (i) the year 3889, A.D. 813-14 when Chippaṭa-Jayāpīḍa (Bṛihaspati) died, and (ii) the year 3926, A.D. 850-51 when dissensions broke out amongst Utpala and his brothers, Ajitāpīḍa was overthrown after the battle between Utpala and Mamma, and Anaṅgāpīḍa was put on the throne by the victorious minister Mamma. While the second date appears to be correct, the accuracy of the first, viz the date of the death of Chippaṭa-Jayāpīḍa has been questioned on several grounds. As pointed out by Bühler, the poet Rājānaka Ratnākara, in his poem *Haravijaya,* states that he wrote this *kāvya* under the patronage of the 'Young Bṛihaspati', while Kalhaṇa mentions Rājānaka Ratnākara amongst the court-poets of Avanti-varman. But if we accept Kalhaṇa's date A.D. 813-14 for the death of Bṛihaspati, also called Chippaṭa-Jayāpīḍa, Ratnākara could hardly have enjoyed the patronage both of Bṛihaspati and Avanti-varman, since their reigns are separated by an interval of at least 42 years. Secondly, it is known

that the ministers Padma, Mamma and Utpala had usurped royal authority at the commencement of the reign of Bṛihaspati (Chippata-Jayāpīḍa), i.e. about A.D. 801-2 according to Kalhaṇa's chronology. Kalhaṇa later on tells us that in or about A.D. 850-51 there was a bloody war between Mamma and Utpala (iv 703-4). These two statements seem to be incompatible. Stein has rightly remarked:

> 'Considering the comparative shortness of the average Indian generation we can scarcely bring ourselves to believe that the brothers of humble origin who, at the commencement of Bṛihaspati's reign, that is according to Kalhaṇa in A.D. 801-2, were already strong enough to usurp regal powers, should have been alive to fight a hard contested battle fully half a century later. It seems far more probable that the reign of Bṛihaspati fell in reality much nearer to the middle of the ninth century which witnessed the events leading to the extention of the Kārkoṭa dynasty and its replacement by Utpala's family' (*Raj.* Eng. trans. Vol. 1, Intr., p. 96). Therefore, the date A.D. 813-14 for the death of Chippaṭa Bṛihaspati has to be rejected.

For the Kārkoṭa chronology, therefore, we must take either 850-51, the year when differences arose amongst the Utpala brothers, or A.D. 855-56, the year of Avanti-varman's accession, as our starting point from which to calculate backwards; but in making these calculations we must keep in mind the dates of some of the Kārkoṭa monarchs known from the Chinese Annals. According to *Annals of the T'ang dynasty*, king Tehen-t'o-lo-pi-li, i.e. Chandrāpīḍa, sent an embassy to China in A.D. 713. Further, from the same source we learn that the Chinese emperor granted the title of king to Chandrāpīda in A.D. 720 at the latter's request expressed through the embassy. It means that Chandrāpīḍa must have been alive at least in A.D. 719.

Kalhaṇa has assigned a total period of 254 years 5 months and 27 days to the Kārkoṭa dynasty. Assuming the correctness of the lengths of various reigns, and calculating backward from 855-56, we arrive at A.D. 600 as the date of the establishment of the Kārkoṭa rule, and the years A.D. 686-94 for the reign of Chandrāpīḍa, who, sent an embassy to China in A.D. 713. Assuming that Chandrāpīḍa had ascended the throne two years before this date, there will be a discrepancy of 25 years between a definitely recorded date for Chandrāpīḍa, and the computed date. We must prefer the former and adjust Kalhaṇa's chronology accordingly. As the last date for the Kārkoṭas and the accession of Avanti-varman is immutably fixed, we

may place the commencement of the Kārkoṭa rule 25 years later, (i.e. in A.D. 625 and assume 230 years A.D. 625 to 855), instead of 254 years 5 months given by Kalhaṇa, for the rule of the Kārkoṭas. This reduction of 25 years may be made as follows.

The three years assigned to Jajja should be omitted since his rule falls, as a matter of fact, within the limits of the reign of Jayāpīḍa whose throne he usurped. Secondly, for reasons stated above, we have to reduce the long interval between Chippaṭa Bṛihaspati and Avanti-varman. We may, therefore, cut down the 37 years assigned to Ajitāpīḍa by Kalhaṇa to 15 only, and place him between 835-50 and his predecessor Chippaṭa Bṛihaspati between 823-35.

2. *The Pre-Kārkoṭa Period*

To the kings of Book III, Kalhaṇa has assigned 589 years 10 months. This period includes the fabulously long reign of 300 years assigned to Raṇāditya. There are good grounds to regard Raṇāditya as a historical figure, but the length of his reign must be reduced. The first king in Book III of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* is Meghavāhana who in all probability is a representative of the Kidāra Kushāṇas. Therefore the commencement of his reign may be placed *c*. A.D. 350. We shall thus get a period of only 275 years (A.D. 350-625) for the kings of Book III, as against 589 years 10 months or 590 years assigned to them by Kalhaṇa. It is not very difficult to effect this reduction, as Raṇāditya's reign alone has to be reduced by about 280 years, and a further reduction of 35 years may be easily made by cutting down the reign of Yudhishṭhira II to a brief period of 4 years only, since no events of his reign have been recorded and there is nothing to justify the long reign of 39 years assigned to him.

As has been shown in the main narrative, Kalhaṇa's knowledge of this period is not very accurate, and his chronological scheme, therefore, must be treated with great reserve. The pre-Kārkoṭa chronology has therefore to be reconstructed on the general considerations of historical evidence, particularly the numismatic data, and the followng broad outlines may be suggested.

The unknown foreigners (probably Kushāṇas)	300- 50
The Kidāra Kushāṇas	350-410
The Imperial Guptas through their nominee Mātṛigupta.	410- 14

The Kidāra Kushāṇas restored under Pravarasena	414-515
Hūṇas	515-600
Indigenous rule—Vikramāditya and Bālāditya	600- 25

The genealogy and chronology of the subsequent period may be represented by the following tables.

The Kārkoṭa Dynasty (A.D. 625-855)

Durlabha-vardhana-Prajñāditya-Anaṅgalekhā.

A.D. 625-61

- *Malhaṇa* (did not rule)
- Durlabhaka-Pratāpāditya (A.D. 661-711)
  - Chandrāpīḍa-Vinayāditya 711-20
  - Tārāpīḍa-Udayāditya 720-24
  - Muktāpīḍa-Lalitāditya 724-61
    - Kuvalayāpīḍa 761-62
    - Vajrāditya-Bappiyaka 762-69
      - *Tribhuvanāpīḍa* (did not rule)
        - Ajitāpīḍa 835-50
          - Utpalāpīḍa 853-55
      - Prithivyāpīḍa I 769-73
      - Saṁgrāmāpīḍa I (ruled for 7 days)
      - Jayāpīḍa-Vinayāditya 773-804
        - Lalitāpīḍa 804-16
          - Chippaṭa-Jayāpīḍa-Brihaspati 823-35
        - Saṁgrāmāpīḍa II (Prithivyāpīḍa) 816-23
          - Anaṅgāpīḍa 850-53

N.B. The names printed in italics are given merely to indicate line of descent. They did not rule.

3. *The Line of Utpala* A.D. 855-6 to 939

Uppa (a distiller)

Padma | *Utpala* | *Kalyāṇa* | *Mamma* | *Dharma* | Jayādevī *m*: Lalitāpīḍa

Utpala → *Sukhavarman*

Sukhavarman → Avanti-varman A.D. 855/6-883 | *Śūra-varman* | *Samara-varman*

Avanti-varman → Śaṁkara-varman-Sugandhā A.D. 883-902, A.D. 904-6

Śūra-varman → *Sukha-varman* → Nirjita-varman (Paṅgu) A.D. 921-23

Śaṁkara-varman → Gopāla-varman A.D. 902-4 | Śaṁkaṭa-varman A.D. 904

Nirjita-varman → Pārtha A.D. 906-21, Again A.D. 934-35 | Chakra-varman (a) 923-33 (b) 935 (c) 936-37 | Sūra varman I 933-34

Pārtha → Unmattāvanti 937-39 → Śūra-varman II deposed 939

4. *House of Vīradeva*

Vīradeva

Kāmadeva | *Rāmadeva*

Kāmadeva → *Prabhākaradeva* → Yaśaskaradeva A.D. 939-48 → Saṁgrāmadeva A.D. 949

Rāmadeva → *Varṇaṭa*

5. *The House of Abhinava* A.D. *949-1003*

Abhinava (a clerk)
|
Saṅgrāma-gupta
|
Parva-gupta A.D. 949-50
|
Kshema-gupta A.D. 950-58 *m* Diddā daughter of Siṁharāja of Lohara A.D. 980-1003

Abhimanyu A.D. 958-72
|
- Nandi-gupta 972-73
- Tribhuvana 973-75
- Bhīma-gupta 975-80

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE WESTERN FRONTIER

1. RISE OF ISLAM

WHEN HARSHA-VARDHANA and Pulakeśin II were struggling for empire in India, the rise of Islam in Arabia was rapidly changing the face of the world. This new religious sect soon developed into a militant political power before whose onslaught kingdoms in Western Asia and Northern Africa tumbled down like houses of cards. The Prophet, who was both the temporal and spiritual head and established his sovereignty over the whole of Arabia, died in A.D. 632. In 636 the mighty Persian Empire collapsed in the battle of Cadesia and before A.D. 640 Syria and Egypt were subdued, and the banner of Islam floated over the whole of Persia as far east as Herat. During the next ten years the Caliphs—as the successors of the Prophet were called—extended the boundary of their empire to the Oxus, and began that forward movement to the west along the entire northern border of Africa which was destined to overwhelm Spain and reach the heart of France from the south, till the great victory of Charles Martel in A.D. 732 checked its progress and fixed the Pyrenees as the further limit of the Muslim Empire in the West.

It is difficult to say whether Harsha-vardhana or Pulakeśin, at least one of whom must have carried on diplomatic intercourse with Persia (pp. 420-21), had any knowledge of these great events that were taking place outside the little world in which they lived and fought. But it seems that even if they knew it, they did not realize the gravity of the peril which threatened India. For at the very moment when the forces of Islam were knocking at the gates of India, Harsha-vardhana was busy in his military campaigns against Orissa, and the Pallavas and Chālukyas were engaged in a prolonged and deadly struggle for supremacy. Yet no Indian statesman, even with a moderate knowledge of what was happening immediately outside the borders of India, should have overlooked the fact that the new political situation in the west was fraught with grave danger for the security of his country. This furnishes the first, but by no means, the last, historical example when India had to pay dear for keeping aloof from the international politics of the day.

So far as we can judge, the ignorance, or the equanimity, of the

Indian potentates was mainly due to the fact that between them and the outside world lay a few petty border states on the west which were not concerned with, and did not count for much in, Indian politics. They served as the iron curtain which shut off the gaze of Indian politicians.

As the first impact of the Muslim invasion fell on them, it is necessary to describe their position and status at some length. Fortunately we can have a much clearer view of the Indian borderland during this period than is generally possible in Indian history. This is due to the detailed account left by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuan Tsang who travelled over this region some time in A.D. 642 or 643.

2. THE FRONTIER STATES

About this time there were four important kingdoms in the western border, viz. the kingdoms of Kapiśa and Udyāna in the north, that of Sindh in the south, and another, called Tsao-kū-ṭa or Tsaukūṭa by the Chinese pilgrim, which lay between these two.

According to the description of Hiuan Tsang, Kapiśa was a powerful State whose supremacy was acknowledged by ten other kingdoms in the neighbourhood. Though it is difficult to identify or locate them all, it may be safely presumed that the whole of Afghanistan from Bamian on the west to the Indus on the east and from the Hindukush on the north to the Bannu district on the south was subject to the king of Kapiśa.[1] It included Kafiristan—a name which is probably derived from ancient Kapiśa—and also the cities of Kābul, Jalalabad and Peshawar.

To the north and east of Kapiśa lay Udyāna which comprised the present districts of Swat, Panjkora, Bajaur and Buner. But we find it incorporated into the kingdom of Kapiśa in A.D. 745, and this probably took place long before.[2]

The kingdom of Sindh, with its feudatory states, comprised the lower valley of the Indus, extending as far north as Multan on the left and Bannu on the right side of that river. Hiuan Tsang mentions two other States bordering on Sindh, viz Lang-kie-lo, immediately to the west, comprising modern Makran and Kirman, and Ki-kiang-na (Kekkāṇa or al-Kikan of the Arab chronicles) which lay to its north. According to the Chinese pilgrim the former was sub-

1 Cunningham (*Ancient Geography*, pp. 19-20) includes the whole of Afghanistan up to Bolan Pass in the south, but as we shall see later, the region round this Pass formed part of Sindh, and the Kandahar region was probably included in Tsao-kū-ṭa.

2 *JA*, 1895, p. 348, n. 3.

ject to Persia, and the latter was divided among a number of independent clans. But according to *Chach-nāma,* the local chronicle of Sindh, and other authorities to which reference will be made later, not only these two States but also Multan were all dependencies of Sindh. That Hiuan Tsang's information about these remote countries was not up-to-date follows from the mention of Persia as a suzerain power, for we know that it was overwhelmed by the Arabs several years before. The statement of *Chach-nāma* may therefore be right, though, as it admits, these outlying provinces sometimes declared independence.

Between the kingdoms of Kapiśa and Sindh, as defined above, Hiuan Tsang locates a large kingdom called Tsao-kū-ṭa or Tsao-li. This is almost certainly to be identified with Zābul or Zābulistān of the Arab geographers, which comprised the upper valley of the Helmand river together with a large extent of territories both to the east and west of it, and included the cities of Kandahar and Ghaznah (Ghazni).

Hiuan Tsang has left some accounts of the culture of the territories described above. Sindh had an Indian ruler and was Indian in language, literature and religion. This was very nearly true also of Lang-kie-lo (modern Makran and Kirman). Hiuan Tsang says that the letters of this country are much the same as those of India, but their language is a little different. He adds that there are some hundred *saṅghārāmas* (Buddhist monasteries) and several hundred *deva* temples. It is said in the biography of Hiuan Tsang that 'from Lang-kie-lo, going north-west, we come to the country of Po-la-see (Persia) which is not within the boundaries of India'.[3] This definitely implies that Lang-kie-lo was regarded as a part of India.

As regards Tsao-kū-ṭa or Zabulistan we are told that their writing and spoken language differed from those of other countries, but the people were mostly Buddhist and 'there were some hundreds of monasteries and above 10,000 Brethren, all Mahāyānists'. The reigning king was a true believer in Buddhism and there were some tens of *deva* temples. Numismatic evidence shows that it was a powerful kingdom in the seventh century A.D.[4] One of its rulers Śrī Vāsudeva calls himself king of Zāulistān and Multan. Another coin, whose legend and date are somewhat doubtful, seems to be issued by a king Shāhi (or Vahi) Tigin who calls himself ruler of both India and Persia. The legends on these coins are written both in Indian and

3 *Life*, tr. by Beal, p. 150.

4 Opinions differ about the date of these coins and the reading of their legends. I have followed the views of Cunningham who gives a good account of them in his *Later Indo-Scythians*, pp. 291-93.

Pehlevi characters. Coins of several other kings, some of them containing the word Zāulistān, have been found in the Indus valley.

Kapiśa, which was ruled by a king of the Kshatriya caste, was a stronghold of Buddhism, and its language, though coarser and ruder than that of its dependencies, such as Lamghan, Jalalabad and countries further east, was Indian. Udyāna (Swat valley) was also a stronghold of Buddhism and its 'spoken language was different from, but bore much resemblance to, that of India'. Hiuan Tsang regarded only the kingdom of Kapiśa proper and Tsao-kū-ṭa as geographically outside the boundaries of India, but even these may be regarded as politically and culturally a part of this country.

Judged by the test of language, religion, and culture, the western boundary of India, in the seventh century A.D., may thus be roughly indicated by an imaginary line from Kandahar to Kabul, extended north-east right up to the Hindukush and southwest along the boundaries of Baluchistan to the sea-coast. The hilly region in the north between this line and the Hindukush still formed politically a part of India, but a strong admixture of Turkish element, introduced no doubt by the Śaka, Kushāṇa and Hūṇa invaders, had already distinguished it culturally from India. The king who ruled over these regions was, according to a later tradition, a descendant of Kanishka, but the very fact that Hiuan Tsang calls him a Kshatriya by caste, shows, what we might also otherwise infer, that he had been thoroughly Indianised.

3. KĀBUL AND ZĀBUL

The Arabs cast a longing eye towards the fair plains and cities of India from the very beginning of their militant career.[5] The first military expedition was sent across the sea to Tanah, i.e. Thana near Bombay, about A.D. 637. Similar expeditions were sent against Broach and Debal (a port of Sindh) during the next five years, but none of these achieved any conspicuous success.

5 The account of the Arab expedition is based on the following:

(a) *Kitab Futuh al-Buldān* by Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn-Jabir al-Balādhuri, commonly referred to as Balādhuri. Extracts from this work are given in *HIED*, Vol. I, pp. 113ff. But there is a good English translation by P. K. Hitti (Vol. I) and F. C. Murgotten (Vol. II). I have used this translation and all references in this chapter are to vol. II which deals with India.

(b) *Chach-nāma*. Extracts from this are given in *HIED*, but I have used the English translation of the work by Mirza Kalichbeg Ferdunbegh (Karachi, 1900).

(c) Le Strange—*The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*. It gives a good geographical account of the Indian borderland.

(d) *The Arab Invasion of India by* R. C. Majumdar (Supplement to *JIH*, Vol. X, Part 1).

It has been suggested by some that these three expeditions were neither undertaken for conquest nor authorized by the Caliph.[6] According to this view only groups of Arab merchants landed at these places for purposes of trade, though it is admitted that some skirmishes were fought with the natives. Further the Arabs were not interested in territorial acquisition in India until a grave provocation was given by the ruler of Sindh in *c* A.D. 709. when the first armed batch of the Arab Muslims landed at Debal. This view, however, cannot be reconciled either with the general history of Islam's militant career, or with the express statement of Al-Balādhuri, the greatest and most reliable authority on the subject. He represents these as military expeditions, and gives details of many others directed against the frontiers of India which completely refute the view of the peaceful penetration into India by the Arabs. It may be true that a number of Arabs came to India for peaceful purposes and settled in this country; that they learned Indian languages and not only composed original poems but also translated the Qurān into them; that they followed Indian customs and manners, married in Indian society and adopted Indian titles and names, that the Indians were so profoundly impressed with the new faith that on an average 50,000 of them embraced Islam every year. No satisfactory evidence has, however, been brought forward to prove that this state of things was true of the period before the Arab conquest of Sindh. But whatever we might think of these peaceful relations, there is no doubt that the Arabs were eager for territorial conquests in India and made systematic inroads against all the three kingdoms of Kābul, Zābul and Sindh. As the first two were often united in offering resistance to the aggressions of Islam, their history may be treated together in the first place.

The Arabs conquered Seistan shortly after A.D. 650, and advanced towards Zābulistān along the Helmand river till they reached Kish which the Arab chronicler Balādhuri describes as belonging to al-Hind, i.e. India. Kish has been identified with Kaj or Kuhich of the present day near Rudbar, a well-known place on the Helmand, not very far from its mouth. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn-smurah, governor of Seistan during the Caliphate of Othmān, led an expedition against this place and proceeded as far as Bust, higher up on the Helmand. But the progress of Muslim forces was checked here, and they entered into an amicable agreement with Bust and Zābulistān. Soon after this Seistan also revolted and drove out the Muslims who thus lost practically everything they had gained in this region.

6 *PAIOC*, X, pp. 403ff.

Seistan was reconquered during the Caliphate of 'Alī (A.D. 656-61) and 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān was re-appointed its governor by the next Caliph Mu-a'wiya (A.D. 661-80). 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān renewed his expedition and his victorious forces advanced as far as Kābul. The city of Kābul was besieged but it made a heroic resistance for several months. The city fell at last and the Muslim governor concluded a treaty. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān then invaded Zābulistān and conquered it. But as soon as 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān was removed from his post, shortly before his death in A.D. 670, the king of Kābul drove out all the Muslims from the city, and Ratbil (apparently a title by which Arab chroniclers always refer to the king of Zābulistān)[7] regained possession of his kingdom and occupied the whole country as far as Bust. But Ratbil, being defeated and pursued by the new governor, concluded a treaty of peace both for his own kingdom and Kābul, on payment of one million *dirhams*.

Towards the end of the reign of Caliph Yazid (A.D. 680-3) Kābul revolted again, and the Muslim forces sent against it were totally routed at Junzah. The governor of Seistan, who led the army, and some distinguished members of the aristocracy, lay dead on the field and the rest fled. Abu-'Ubaidah, possibly the Muslim representative at Kābul, who was imprisoned, had to be ransomed for 500,000 *dirhams*.

The king of Zābulistān also declared war against the Arabs and probably proceeded as far as the lake into which the Helmand river flows. Though he was defeated and killed in A.D. 680, the war was continued by his son, who did not oppose the advance of the Muslims till they penetrated deep into his country. Then he blocked the mountain passes and the Muslim general was forced to conclude a treaty by which, on payment of 300,000 *dirhams*, he promised not to raid the country in future. The Caliph, however, disapproved of the treaty and dismissed the general.

The Muslim invasion of Kābul about A.D. 698 was even less successful. The king of Zābulistān joined the ruler of Kābul and employed his old tactics again with even more brilliant success. The mountain passes were blocked and the Muslim general was dissuaded by his colleagues from offering terms to the enemy. So the army decided to fight their way out and suffered terrible losses and hardships. At last the Muslim general was compelled to purchase the liberation of himself and his remaining followers by a ransom of

7 Elliot, Raverty, and other scholars held that Kābul and Zābul denoted the same kingdom under Ratbil. But Balādhuri clearly distinguishes the two. As all the kings of Zābulistān are referred to as Ratbil it must be regarded as a title.

700,000 *dirhams*. But he shortly died of grief for the terrible miseries he had brought upon his men.

It was a veritable disaster for the Muslim forces, and elaborate preparations were set on foot to avenge the humiliation. Heavy war-cess was imposed on Basra and Kufa in order to raise a new army which was so splendidly equipped that it was named the 'peacock army'. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān, who led this army, defeated Ratbil, the king of Zābulistān, in A.D. 699, but profiting by the experience of his predecessors, he moved very cautiously. Hajjāj, the governor of Irak, was dissatisfied with his slow progress and ordered him to advance rapidly. When 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān remonstrated, he was threatened with supersession. Thereupon he made a treaty on favourable terms with the king of Zābulistān and declared war both against Hajjāj and the Caliph. In spite of initial successes he was ultimately defeated and took refuge with Ratbil (A.D. 701-2) but a year or two later he died or committed suicide. Ratbil took advantage of the situation and concluded a treaty with Hajjāj by which the latter agreed not to make war upon him for 7 (or 9) years on payment of an annual subsidy in kind. This arrangement continued till the death of Hajjāj in A.D. 714. Then Ratbil refused to pay any tribute, and maintained his independence for forty years without any further molestation.

This prolonged inactivity of the Muslims was undoubtedly due to the internal troubles and weakness of the Caliphate during the last days of the Umayyids. For, soon after the establishment of the powerful Abbasid Caliphate, the governor of Seistan declared war against Ratbil. Ratbil was defeated and promised to pay tribute. He, however, did not pay it regularly, and we are told that the Muslim officers collected tribute from him as best as they could (or according to their strength and weakness).

The Caliph Al-Ma'mūn (A.D. 813-33) sent an army against the king of Kābul who acknowledged obedience, professed Islam, and agreed to pay tribute. But he regained independence and apostatized almost immediately after. Ratbil, who paid double the tribute, and was thereupon left unmolested by Al-Ma'mūn, also soon became independent again.

It was not till A.D. 870 that Zābulistān was finally conquered by Yākūb, son of Lais, who had virtually made himself the master of Seistan. The king was killed and the people were forced to embrace Islam. But Kābul, which was also conquered by Yākūb about the same time, recovered its independence and continued to form a part of India, both politically and culturally, till the end of the tenth

century A.D. Its later history will be dealt with in connection with that of the Shāhiya dynasty.

Though both Kābul and Zābul ultimately succumbed to Islam, the heroic resistance they offered to the repeated onslaughts of that world-power deserves the highest praise and admiration. Few countries in the world, far less small principalities like these, have defied the arms of Islam so bravely and for so long. For more than 200 years the Arabs struggled hard to subdue them, but in vain. They no doubt obtained brilliant victories but also suffered severe reverses. They were able from time to time to impose some sort of suzerainty and occasionally exacted tributes from them. But in spite of this Kābul and Zābul successfully opposed the political and cultural onslaught of Islam till A.D. 870, for a century and a half after Sindh had become a Muslim province.

4. SINDH

A detailed history of Sindh in the seventh century A.D. is given in *Chach-nāma,* a Persian translation of an old Arabic history of the conquest of Sindh by the Arabs. The date of the original work is not known, but the Persian translation was made about A.D. 1216. It begins with an account of king Sahiras, son of Sāhasi Rāi. He ruled over an extensive dominion which is said to have included Makran, Kandahar, Seistan, and the whole of the Indus valley up to the border of Kashmir. The king personally ruled the central part of his kingdom from his capital at Alor, while the rest of his kingdom was divided into four provinces, with headquarters, respectively, at Bahmanabad, Siwistan, Iskandah and Multan. The rulers of these provinces are referred to as governors by some authorities, but called tributary rulers in *Chach-nāma.*

Sahiras was succeeded by his son Sāhasi Rāi II. During his reign Chach, a poor Brāhmaṇa, rose to high power and office, and on his master's death ascended the throne. According to *Tuḥfat-ul-Kirām,* composed in the latter half of the eighteenth century A.D., this event took place in A.D. 622 and the dynasty of Sahiras, consisting of five kings, ruled for 137 years (i.e. A.D. 485-622). The genealogy of the kings, given in this text, does not, however, tally with the account in *Chach-nāma.*

The provincial rulers did not at first acknowledge the authority of Chach, but were subdued by force, and the stream that separates Makran from Kirman was fixed as the western boundary of his kingdom. Chach also marched against Kandabil, and its people agreed to pay an annual tribute. Kandabil has been identified with Gan-

dava[8] in the Brahui territory in Baluchistan, a little to the south-east of Kelat. According to Al-Balādhuri, Kikān also formed a part of Sindh. Kikān undoubtedly comprised the hilly country near Quetta and Bolan Pass and its name has probably been preserved in Kakar lying to the east of Quetta. It probably formed a part of Kandabil, and in any case, was most likely conquered by Chach.

Thus when Chach died about A.D. 662, he left a vast kingdom to his brother Chandar who ruled for seven years. The death of Chandar was followed by a quarrel about succession and the kingdom was divided into two parts. But Dāhar, the younger son of Chach, who ascended the throne at Alor about A.D. 670, reunited them after 30 years.

The chief event in Dāhar's reign was the Arab invasion which overwhelmed him and his kingdom. As noted above, the Arabs sent an expedition against Debal, the chief sea-port of Sindh, some time between A.D. 637 and 643. Balādhuri speaks of a Muslim victory, but according to *Chach-nāma,* the governor of Chach defeated the Muslims and killed their leader at the battle of Debal. The latter account seems to be true, for we find Caliph 'Umar (A.D. 634-44) next sending an expedition towards Makran and Kirman. Evidently, having failed to approach Sindh by sea from the south, he proposed to attack by land the western frontier of the kingdom. But the governor of Irak, whom he asked to supply detailed information, reported that the king of Sindh was very powerful and by no means willing to submit to the Muslims. Thereupon 'Umar abandoned the idea of attacking it. The next Caliph 'Uthmān (A.D. 644-56) also gave up the project of invading Sindh on getting similar reports.

Some time about A.D. 660, during the Caliphate of 'Alī, a well-equipped Muslim army advanced against Sindh through Kikān, i.e. by the Bolan Pass route. According to Balādhuri, the people of Kikān made a brave stand and routed the Muslim army. The Muslim general was killed together with all but a few of his followers, which included a large number of nobles and chiefs.

After this the Arabs sent several military expeditions against Kikān. The first advanced from the side of Kābul in 665, but did not gain any conspicuous success. The second ended in a disaster, and the routed Muslim army fled to Makran. The next expedition conquered Makran and met with some success in Kikān, but the leader, while raiding the Mid (i.e. the Meds), was defeated and killed. The leader of the fourth expedition was killed in Kikānān. The fifth

8 Some scholars identify Kandabil (or Kandail as written by Balādhuri) with Zihri about 57 miles south-west of Gandava (CHI, III, p. 9).

expedition obtained some successes and acquired much booty, but Kikān was far from being subdued. For more than twenty years (A.D. 660-80) the Arabs concentrated their efforts towards the conquest of this outpost of Sindh, but failed. Their only success was the conquest of Makran.

The Arabs did not resume their aggression against Sindh till about A.D. 705 when Hajjāj was governor of Irak. The Muslim governor of Makrān made some raids and conquered portions of Kandabil (Gandava). Shortly after this happened an incident which induced Hajjāj to send a full-scale expedition to Sindh. As this ultimately led to the conquest of Sindh, the incident may be discussed in some detail.

A party of widows and orphan daughters[9] of the Arab traders who had died in Ceylon were sent by the king of that country to Hajjāj. The ship in which they were travelling fell into the hands of the pirates near Debal, the chief port of Sindh, at the mouth of the Indus. Hajjāj wrote to Dāhar to secure the release of these women, but the latter replied that he had no control over the pirates who captured them. It was also alleged that Dāhar refused to arrest and hand over to Hajjāj the Arab convicts who had fled and taken shelter in Sindh.[10] Hajjāj regarded this as the *casus belli* and proposed to send a powerful expedition to Sindh. The Caliph was at first very unwilling, but later agreed at the importunities of Hajjāj.

Some scholars argue[11] that it was this provocation which led the Arabs to think for the first time of territorial conquests in Sindh. But the account of the earlier expeditions, noted above, gives the lie direct to this view. As a matter of fact the conquest of Sindh had been one of the chief objectives of the Arabs for more than a century. This is not only proved by their successive military expeditions against Debal, Makran, and Kikān but also by their practice of designating the leaders of these expeditions in advance as governor of Sindh. Even Hajjāj was appointed governor of Irak, 'Hind and Sindh' (!)[12] as early as A.D. 695. The Arabs had been chafing at their failure to conquer Sindh, and Hajjāj merely seized the piracy as a pretext to subdue a country that had so long defied the arms of Islam.

As soon as Hajjāj secured the permission of Caliph Walid, he sent an expedition against Debal under 'Ubaidullah. As noted above,

9 Some scholars refer only to orphan daughters (*CHI*, III, p. 1) but others include widows (*PAIOC*, X, p. 409).

10 *PAIOC*, X, p. 409.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 404.

12 *IHQ*, XVI, p. 597.

Debal was the chief sea-port at the mouth of the Indus, but on account of the constant shifting of the river beds it has not been possible to identify it with certainty. Some have located it near Thatha or Lari Bandar, while others have identified it with present Bhambor or Kakar Bukera.[13] According to Balādhuri the expedition against Debal proved a failure and the Muslim general was killed. Then a second expedition was sent against Debal by way of sea from Oman and it was opposed by Jaisiṁha, son of Dāhar. After a pitched battle lasting the whole day the Muslim army was routed and its general killed.

Hajjāj then made elaborate preparations for an expedition against Sindh. He placed his nephew and son-in-law Muḥammad, son of Qāsim,[14] at its command and provided him with men, arms, and munitions on a lavish scale. The Caliph lent him the services of 6,000 Syrian soldiers fully armed.

Muḥammad advanced through Makran and laid siege to Debal (A.D. 711). With the help of the siege materials reaching him by way of sea, he took the fort of Debal by assault. No quarter was given, and for three days the inhabitants were ruthlessly butchered by the Muslim soldiers.

Muḥammad then marched along the Indus and reached Nehrun, modern Haidarabad. According to both *Chach-nāma* and Balādhuri, our two principal authorities, the town was treacherously surrendered by the Buddhists who had already concluded a secret pact with Hajjāj. According to Balādhuri, the governor of the city was a Buddhist who not only submitted without any fight but actively helped Muḥammad in the subsequent campaign. The Buddhist residents of many other towns also did the same. According to *Chach-nāma* they were influenced, partly by their aversion to slaughter and bloodshed, and partly by their belief in the prophetic saying in the sacred books that India would be conquered by Islam. The last would also partly account for the treachery of the non-Buddhists which, accord-

13 Cf. App. A. to my article 'Arab Invasion of India' *JIH*, X, (i) supplement, which deals with the ancient geography of Sindh, particularly the places that fell on the way of Muḥammad.

14 The full name is written as 'Imādu'd-din Muḥammad Kāsim, son of Ukail Sakifi in *Chach-nāma*, which adds that he was then a youth of 17 (I, p. 73). The name usually written in this text is Muḥammad Kāsim. In the *Tārīkh-i-Mās'ūmī* (composed in A.D. 1600) he is called Muḥammad, son of Qāsim, and this view is now generally adopted (*CHI*, III, p. 2). S. N. Dhar states that the name given in *Chach-nāma* is Karimuddin Muḥammad Kāsim (*IHQ*, XVI, p. 596) but I have not found it in the translation by Ferdunbegh which he also quotes as authority. I have adopted the spelling in *CHI*, II.

ing to *Chach-nāma*, played no mean part in the final outcome of the war.

Muḥammad then conquered Siwistan (Sehwan), after which some leading chiefs tendered their submission. Treachery became contagious and not only powerful and high officials but even 4,000 warlike Jats of Siwistan joined Muḥammad. He then leisurely proceeded along the western bank of the Indus, conquering various places on the way, till he reached a point on the river opposite which Dāhar stood ready with his army to meet him. Here Muḥammad halted for two months, whereupon Hajjāj reprimanded him and urged him to cross the river and fight with Dāhar. He thereupon built a bridge of boats at Sakrah (probably Sakhar) and his whole army passed over to the other side without any loss, mainly due to the treachery of the two brothers who were, in succession, put by Dāhar in charge of the fort in the rocky island of Bet (Bakhar), which was a highly strategic point commanding the passage of the river. By the help of the same two brothers Muḥammad was able to cross without difficulty the lake that lay between him and Dāhar's main force, near the fort of Raor, which may be identified with Rohri, not far from the capital city Alor.

Here a pitched battle took place, and Dāhar fought with bravery for two days. According to *Chach-nāma*, which gives a detailed account, Muḥammad's army was nearly routed on the second day. 'The army of Islam became irresolute, and their lines were broken up in great confusion.' Muḥammad, however, rallied his men and the renegade chiefs of Sindh came to his aid. Dāhar, seated on his elephant, personally led the attack, and Muḥammad directed his naptha-flingers to shoot at him. Dāhar's litter having caught fire, he dismounted and was killed. This was a signal for the disruption of his army which was completely routed.

The survivors took refuge in the fort of Raor which was defended by the brave queen till conditions became hopeless, and she burnt herself with other ladies to escape the infamy of falling into the hands of the Muslims. Jaisiṁha, the son of Dāhar, now strongly fortified Alor, the capital city, and Bahmanabad, a famous city and fort, the ruins of which lie about 8 miles to the south-east of Shadadpur railway station, while he himself adopted a mode of guerilla warfare. Muḥammad besieged Bahmanabad which offered a stout resistance. Every day the besieged came out and fierce fight continued from morning till evening. They fought for six months in this way, when some leading citizens entered into a secret covenant with Muḥammad and betrayed the fort. At Alor, too, after some fighting, the residents made peace with Muḥammad, whereupon Fofi,

son of Dāhar, who was in charge, left the city and joined his brother Jaisiṁha.

Muḥammad then besieged Multan which offered a brave resistance for two months, till a traitor pointed out to Muḥammad the source of water-supply for the town and thus forced it to surrender. The conquest of Multan was followed up by that of Kiraj and Bailaman. The former denotes Kangra and the latter probably some territory in Rājputāna. According to *Chach-nāma,* Muḥammad himself advanced to the frontier of Kashmir and sent an expedition to Kanauj. But all this may be doubted, as none of the authorities mentions the conquest of intermediate territories.

The triumphant career of Muḥammad was suddenly cut short by political changes at home. Hajjāj died in A.D. 714, and the Caliph Walid, a year later. The next Caliph, Sulaiman, was the sworn enemy of Hajjāj who had also incurred the hostility of Salih, the newly appointed governor of Irak. The enemies of Hajjāj wreaked vengeance upon his family, and Muḥammad was taken prisoner, insulted, and tortured to death by Salih. Such was the tragic end of the man who laid the foundations of Muslim power in India, though posterity has woven a romantic tale round this episode.[15]

Jaisiṁha took full advantage of the internal discord in the Caliphate and re-occupied Bahmanabad. Other conquered chiefs also followed suit. The Caliph sent Habib to subdue the rebels, but it appears that only Alor and a few other localities were conquered by him. The next Caliph 'Umar II (717-20) offered to recognise the independence of the chiefs of Sindh provided they adopted Islam. Jaisiṁha accepted the offer, but soon quarrelled with Junaid, the governor of Sindh, apostatized, and declared war against him. Junaid, however, defeated Jaisiṁha and took him prisoner. Thus ended the dynasty of Dāhar and the independence of Sindh.

The circumstantial narrative of the Muslim conquest of Sindh, sketched above, is solely based on *Chach-nāma* and the history of Balādhuri. Both the accounts are written from the point of view of the victors and, as such, it may be doubted whether we can fully rely upon them, specially where the activity of the rulers of Sindh is concerned. That the alleged cause of the war was nothing but an idle pretext for aggressive warfare has been shown above. The triumphant march of Muḥammad from Debal to Raor probably paints him in a too brilliant colour, and underestimates or ignores the efforts

15 No credence should be given to the story that two daughters of Dāhar, who were sent to the Caliph, falsely accused Muḥammad of violating their chastity and thereupon the enraged Caliph sent orders that Muḥammad's body should be sewn in a bag and sent to him (Cf. *PIHC,* V, p. 249).

of the Hindu ruler. The victories are too often attributed to treachery, and the Buddhist sect is generally, though not always, represented as helping the enemy of the country. Even the powerful chiefs and officials are said to have deserted their king and joined their enemy. Though some scholars are loth to believe all this,[16] there may be some truth in the allegations. It should be remembered that the Brahmin Chach had seized the throne by unfair means less than a century before, and it is not unlikely that his family was disliked by a section of the people, specially the loyal adherents of the old royal family and the Buddhists who formed the predominant element of the people. That this dislike should induce them to betray their country, however deplorable in itself, cannot be ruled out as impossible, particularly when both the authorities emphasize this point and give numerous specific instances. On the other hand, the internal weakness of Sindh may have been the chief cause of its downfall. We should remember that the newly established dynasty could not consolidate its power, owing to the rebellions of provincial governors and the long war of succession which kept the kingdom divided for more than 30 years. As the quarrel with the Muslims broke out within 10 years of the re-union, we may easily presume that the ruler of Sindh could not marshall all its resources effectively against the foreign invader.

All these causes probably operated to bring about the downfall of the kingdom of Sindh. But the comparatively easy conquest of Muḥammad, son of Qāsim, should not make us forget the long resistance offered by Sindh against the Arabs. Nor must we withhold the need of praise due to the king and the people for the brave defence of the mountain passes of Kikān, occasionally crowned by brilliant victories, and the successful blocking of the southern route across Makran or over the sea for three quarters of a century since the first raid. The Muslim historians have paid high tribute to the enemy for their bravery and fighting qualities and, taking everything into consideration, the modern historians are not justified in regarding the defeat of the Indians as an evidence of their inferiority in military skill and discipline.

This becomes still more clear by the subsequent history of the Muslim power in Sindh. Junaid, who completed the conquest of the country, sent several expeditions to the interior of India. But though for some time the Arabs carried everything before them, and advanced as far as Malwa and the borders of the Deccan, they were

16 Cf. the views of S. N. Dhar in *IHQ*, XVI, pp. 598ff. But it is difficult to accept his view that 'the theory of Buddhist treachery does not stand examination'.

signally defeated by the Pratīhāra king Nāgabhaṭa I, Pulakeśi, the Chālukya chief of Gujarat, and probably also by Yaśovarman. They were forced to retreat and henceforth their power was confined to Sindh. Even there the general rebellion of the people, who gave up the new faith imposed on them, made the position of the Muslims very precarious. This is clearly admitted by Balādhuri who remarks that as there was 'no place of refuge to which the Muslims might flee' a new capital city was built, called Mahfuzah, on one side of a lake near the old city of Bahmanabad. The capital was shortly removed to Mansurah, a city built on the other side of the same lake. The governor Hakam was killed in course of his attempt to pacify the country, and his successors 'kept fighting the enemy and subduing places in the neighbourhood whose inhabitants rebelled'. Thus, during the last years of the Umayyads, they virtually lost hold over Sindh.

The 'Abbāsid Caliphs made an attempt to re-establish the power of Islam in Sindh. Hishām, the governor of Caliph Al-Mansur (A.D. 754-75), is said to have conquered Multan and Kashmir. But even the little that we know of the history of Kashmir makes it almost impossible to believe that this kingdom was conquered in any sense by the Arabs. As has been noted above its powerful ruler Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa (A.D. 724-61) is said to have thrice defeated the Arabs. The real fact seems to be that the Arabs came into conflict with Lalitāditya, and in spite of their initial successes, if any, their advance was checked by him. The re-conquest of Multan if true, merely shows that a large part of Sindh again came into the hands of the Arabs. But the brave people of Kikān held out till c. A.D. 840. According to Balādhuri, an expedition was sent against the Kikanites, who are Zutt (i.e. Jaths), during the Caliphate of Mutasimbullah (A.D. 833-42). Although they were defeated, we hear of frequent conflicts with the Jaths and the Meds in the neighbourhood of Alor, the old Hindu capital of Sindh. We hear of other expeditions in the course of which the Muslim army sometimes met with grave disaster.

Thus with all their strength and resources the 'Abbāsids failed to consolidate the Muslim power even in Sindh. The Arab chronicles admit their failure to achieve further conquests in India. This is confirmed by Indian evidence. The Pāla emperor Dharmapāla is said to have exercised supremacy over the Yavanas or Muslims. The failure of one or more Muslim expeditions is hinted at in several texts and epigraphic records.[17] Thus, *Khummana-Raso*, a late work,

17 These have been brought together by D. C. Ganguly in *IHQ*, XIV, p. 813.

refers to a Muslim invasion of Chitor which was repulsed by the Guhila chief Khumman with the help of other Indian rulers. The *Prabandhakośa,* composed in A.D. 1348, states that the Chāhamāna king Govindarāja defeated Sultān Vega Varisa. This Chāhamāna king was most probably the first king of that name who was a feudatory of the Pratīhāra emperor Nāgabhaṭa II. This ruler is said to have defeated the Turushkas, which can only mean at this period the Muslim subjects or soldiers of the Caliph. Now, according to Balādhuri, a governor of Sindh under Caliph Al-Mamun (A.D. 813-33), was named Basar, and most probably this was the chief who is named Sultan Veg Varisa in *Prabandhakośa.* It is not unlikely that the three instances, quoted above, all refer to one and the same expedition under the Pratīhāra emperor Nagabhaṭa and his feudatories and allies. The Kalachuri king Kokkalla I, who also claims to have defeated the Turushkas, might have joined the above rulers. It may thus be held that the 'Abbāsids made a great effort—the first since Junaid's expedition—to conquer India some time between A.D. 800 and 830, and their forces probably advanced as far as Chitor, but the Indian kings offered a combined resistance to them and forced them to retreat. This is of course only a theoretical reconstruction, but the isolated passages scattered in different texts and inscriptions hardly leave any doubt that the 'Abbāsid Caliphs made one or more efforts to extend the Muslim power in India, but failed.

With the decline of the 'Abbāsid power, Sindh became virtually independent and formed a part of the Saffarid kingdom. After its downfall Sindh was divided into two independent states with capitals respectively at Multan and Mansura, neither of which ever became powerful. Multan was in constant dread of a Pratīhāra invasion, but found its security against this in the famous image of God (Sūrya) in one of its temples which was venerated all over India. 'When the unbelievers', says Al-Maṣ'ūdī, 'march against Multan, and the faithful do not feel themselves strong enough to oppose them, they threaten to break their idol and their enemies immediately withdraw'.[18] Ishtakhri also makes a similar statement and adds that 'otherwise the Indians would have destroyed Multan'.[19] As regards Mansura, again Al-Mas'ūdī tells us that 'it was constantly at war with a nation called the Meds, who are a race of Sindh, and also with other races on the frontiers of Sindh'.

Thus even more than three hundred and fifty years after their

18 *HIED,* I, pp. 23-24.
19 *Ibid.,* p. 28.

first incursion, the Arabs could establish their authority only over the frontier region and the lower valley of the Indus. Their repeated attempts to extend their power into the interior proved a failure. Compared with their military achievements in other parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe, the results of their Indian campaign certainly appear to be insignificant. It reflects no small credit on the military skill and political organization of the people of India that the conquerors of the world had to stop at the gateway of their country and could not enter inside for more than three centuries.[20]

20 It is hardly necessary now to refer to the views of Elphinstone (*Hist. of India*, 9th ed., pp. 305-6) and other writers who sought to explain the slow progress of Islam by various theories based on the religious and social institutions of India.

CHAPTER TWENTY

NORTHERN AND EASTERN FRONTIER

1. NEPAL

Jishṇugupta

THE DEATH OF Aṁśu-varman (p. 258) was followed by a period of troubles. *Yuvarāja* Udayadeva, presumably the heir-apparent, mentioned in an inscription of Aṁśu-varman, dated 39, disappears from the scene, and the throne is occupied by one Jishṇugupta. He is described as the ornament of the Lunar family (*Somānvaya*) and a casual reference is made in one of his records to his great-grandfather Māna-gupta-gomin. It is also claimed that he got the throne by hereditary right. It appears therefore that he was not connected either with the old Lichchhavi rulers or with the Thākuri family founded by Aṁśu-varman, and S. Lévi suggests that he belonged to the Āhir or Ābhīra clan which had conquered Nepal shortly before Aṁśu-varman usurped the sovereignty (p. 215). Be that as it may, the charters of Jishnugupta leave no doubt that he ruled over the whole of the Nepal valley proper, and further that he revived the phantom of Lichchhavi sovereignty. He issued his charters from Kailāsakūta, the palace of Aṁśu-varman, but mentions at the beginning the name of a Lichchhavi king residing at the old palace of Mānagriha. Two such kings are known, *viz. Bhattāraka Mahārāja* Śrī Dhrubadeva and *Bhattāraka* Śrī Mānadeva. The difference in the titles given to these two Lichchhavi kings is significant, and there is no doubt that they were mere puppets in the hands of Jishṇugupta who, though not the legitimate king, exercised in full the royal authority. He also issued coins which resembled those of Aṁśu-varman. On the whole, it appears that Jishnugupta not only inherited the dominions, but also continued the policy and tradition of Aṁśu-varman,[1] though he did not probably belong to his family. It is also interesting to note that though Aṁśu-varman is always called *Mahāsāmanta* in his own records, he is referred to as *Bhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja* in an inscription of Jishṇugupta dated

[1] Like Aṁśu-varman, he calls himself *Paśupati-Bhaṭṭāraka-Pādānugrihīta* and *bappa-pādānudhyāta* in his charters.

year 48. The date shows that he ascended the throne, shortly, if not immediately, after the death of Aṁśu-varman, whose last known date is 44 or 45, and continued the use of the same era or system of reckoning.

One of Jishṇugupta's records refers to *yuvarāja* Vishṇugupta. But although evidently heir-presumptive to the throne, he does not seem to have succeeded Jishṇugupta. Even if he did so, his reign must have been very short, for by A.D. 643[2] we find Narendradeva of the Lichchhavi dynasty as the king of Nepal. How the old dynasty revived its power after the successive usurpations of Aṁśu-varman and Jishṇugupta we do not know. But probably it was due to the interference of Tibet. We know from the Chinese chronicles that Narendradeva's father was removed from the throne by his younger brother, whereupon Narendradeva fled to Tibet.[3] It is very likely, therefore, that with the help of the Tibetan king he recovered his paternal throne.

It has been noted above that Udayadeva is mentioned as *yuvarāja* in one of the records of Aṁśu-varman. Now the Paśupati Temple inscription of Nepal, while giving the genealogy of its rulers, mentions this name along with Narendradeva, and although the lacuna in the record, due to the peeling off of certain letters, does not enable us to state definitely the relation between the two, it may be reasonably presumed that Narendradeva was the son of Udayadeva.[4] If we accept this view we may, with the help of the Chinese annals, reconstruct somewhat as follows the political history of Nepal since the death of Aṁśu-varman.

2 Lévi says that it was during the reign of Narendradeva that a Chinese mission visited Nepal for the first time in A.D. 643 (*Nepal*, II, p. 164). Yet he says elsewhere (p. 162) that Vishṇugupta's reign must have been very short as Narendradeva had restored the Lichchhavi rule in Nepal by A.D. 645. His difficulty was evidently caused by assuming A.D. 595 as the starting point of the era used in the charters of Aṁśu-varman and Jishṇugupta. For according to this view Jishṇugupta's last known date, year 48, becomes equivalent to A.D. 643 when, according to the Chinese evidence, Narendradeva was the king of Nepal. Even if we assume that Jishṇugupta died in that year, there is hardly any room for Vishṇugupta. But if, as suggested above, we assume A.D. 586 as the starting point of the era, we get the following chronology which is in full agreement with all known facts.

Aṁśu-varman	A.D. 616-632
Jishṇugupta	,, 632-640
Vishṇugupta	,, 640-642
Narendradeva	,, 642

For a different view, cf. *JAS*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1959), pp. 47-49.

3 Tang Annals quoted in *Nepal*, II, p. 163.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 162-3.

It would appear that Aṁśu-varman had nominated as his successor a Lichchhavi prince named Udayadeva who ascended the throne after his death. But Dhruvadeva, the younger brother of Udayadeva, drove him out with the help of Jishṇugupta. Although Jishṇugupta at first accorded full royal honours to Dhruvadeva, he soon usurped the real power, and replaced Dhruvadeva by Mānadeva who was a mere puppet and is simply referred to as Bhaṭṭāraka. In the meantime Udayadeva's son Narendradeva fled to Tibet and evidently asked not only for protection but also for help to recover his paternal throne. Apart from his position as suzerain, the Tibetan king Sron-btsan Gampo was the son-in-law of Aṁśu-varman, and it was but natural that he should espouse the cause of Narendradeva who represented the line of succession sanctioned by Aṁśu-varman. It may appear somewhat strange that in spite of such powerful support to his rival, Jishṇugupta should have continued to rule in Nepal. The explanation is perhaps to be found in the fact that the Tibetan army was at this time occupied in a distant campaign. As soon as his hands were free, the Tibetan king placed Narendradeva on the throne of Nepal, evidently by defeating Jishṇugupta or his successor.

Narendradeva, Śivadeva II, and Jayadeva II

Narendradeva ascended the throne of Nepal about A.D. 643. A Chinese embassy under Li I-piao, which visited Magadha in 643, passed through Nepal and was received with all honours by Narendradeva. He also helped Wang Hiuan-tse in A.D. 647-48 as will be noted later. In A.D. 651 he sent a mission to China. When Wang Hiuan-tse passed a second time through Nepal in A.D. 657 Narendradeva was still its ruler. Throughout his reign Nepal was visited by a number of Chinese pilgrims who were probably attracted by the piety and devotion of the king. It is no doubt from these sources that the Chinese annalists derived their information about Nepal which we find incorporated in a general account of the country given in the *History of the T'ang Dynasty*. Although this book was written in the tenth century A.D., the picture it gives of Nepal evidently reflects the condition during the reign of Narendradeva. It portrays Nepal as peaceful and prosperous with a high degree of civilization. Both Buddhism and Brahmanism flourished, and the country was full of temples and monasteries. The epigraphic records fully confirm this. The large number of villages mentioned in them prove that the valley was densely populated. The minute regulations about irrigation presuppose a flourishing state of agriculture. Trade and commerce prospered and the merchants were organised in corpora-

tions managed by small executive committees. Sanskrit was held in high honour and was assiduously cultivated.

All the Vaṁśāvalīs agree in stating that Narendradeva introduced the cult of Matsyendranātha, the patron-saint of Nepal, in the year 3623 of the Kaliyuga era. This yields the date A.D. 521 or 522 which, of course, is quite wrong. Probably the Vaṁśāvalīs had a date before them in Śaka era, which was wrongly interpreted as Vikrama era, according to the tradition current in later days. In that case the data would be really A.D. 657 which falls in the reign of Narendradeva.

According to the Paśupati Temple inscription, Narendradeva was succeeded by his son Śivadeva and the latter by his son Jayadeva. We have dated records of both and also know how the queen of the former was related to Aṁśu-varman. This will be evident from the following table which, barring the usurpation of Jishṇugupta, represents the line of succession from Aṁśu-varman, as suggested above, together with the known dates all of which presumably belong to the same era:

Aṁśu-varman (30-44) — Sister

Udayadeva — (Maukhari) Bhoga-varman

Narendradeva

Śivadeva II (119) ....*m*........ Vatsadevī

Jayadeva II (157)

The chief difficulty in accepting this genealogy is the long interval in time between Aṁśu-varman and Vatsadevī, as well as between Narendradeva and his grandson. The last known date of Aṁśu-varman being year 44, the daughter of his nephew was alive more than 75 years after his death. Again Narendradeva was on the throne in A.D. 643 while his grandson flourished in A.D. 763, 751 or 743 (according as we interpret the dates by the Harsha era or the Tibetan era of A.D. 595 or 586), i.e., more than 100 years later. These things are not impossible though they must be regarded as very unusual. But the objection or the difficulty is not strong enough to justify us in rejecting the genealogy supplied by the Paśupati Temple inscription which is supported by the independent records of Śivadeva and Jayadeva.

The marriage of Śivadeva with Vatsadevī was perhaps a political alliance between two families, both having rightful claims to the throne. But it possibly meant something more. For Vatsadevī's mother was a daughter of the powerful king Ādityasena of Magadha and the marriage probably established an alliance between Magadha and Nepal. It was perhaps this alliance which emboldened the ruler of Nepal in A. D. 702 to throw off the yoke of Tibet. It is said that both Nepal and Po-lo-men revolted at the same time. The latter denotes in a general way Central India, but we have no other record to show that any part of India was at this time subject to Tibet. We know, however, that some time between A.D. 713 and 741 Yaśovarman referred to in Chinese annals as king of Central India, sent an envoy to China asking for help against the Tibetans, and another enemy, more formidable still, viz., the Arabs.[5] Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa, king of Kashmir also sent an envoy between A.D. 736 and 747 who reported to the Chinese emperor that his royal master, in co-operation with the king of Central India, had blocked all the five roads to Tibet and inflicted several defeats upon her people. As Yaśovarman is reputed to have advanced as far as Gauḍa in the course of his victorious campaign, it is not unlikely that the ruler of Nepal acted in concert with him, or took advantage of his fight with Tibet, to declare himself independent of that country. But the geographical position of Nepal made it more vulnerable to an attack from the Tibetan side than any part of India and so it was defeated and had to submit again. A reminiscence of the Tibetan supremacy over Nepal is furnished by the inscription of Śivadeva, dated 119, in which a donated village, otherwise rendered free from taxes, is expressly made liable to furnish five porters as *Bhoṭṭa-vishṭi*, i.e. *corvée* to Bhoṭṭa, the Indian name for Tibet, met with for the first time in this record.

King Śivadeva made many religious endowments and founded a monastery named after him. An inscription containing some donations to this monastery gives Bhaṭṭāraka Śri Śivadeva as the name of the *dūta*. It has been suggested that he might be the king himself, and in that case we must hold that he abdicated the throne.[6] This is, however, very unlikely.

Śivadeva's son and successor Jayadeva II has left us a long record in the Paśupati Temple, dated in the year 153, which, as noted above, has been taken to be equivalent to A.D. 759 by some and A.D. 748 by others. Although neither of these may prove to be correct,

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 174-75.
6 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

the actual date cannot be far removed from them, and there is no doubt that Jayadeva reigned about the middle of the eighth century.

The Paśupati Temple inscription gives the genealogy of the rulers of Nepal which forms the main basis of the history sketched above. It also contains a panegyric of the king in a highly poetic style. One verse of this panegyric is a *double entendre*. In one sense it describes the beauty and good qualities of the king, but taken in another sense it conveys the idea that 'he extended his political influence over the Aṅga country, conquered Kāmarūpa, approached Kāñchī in the south, and bestowed his attention even on the work of administration of the distant Surāshṭra country.'[7] It is further added that king Jayadeva thus displayed the career of a universal monarch and was therefore known as *parachakrakāma* (desirous of winning the kingdoms of his enemies). Although some scholars have taken this to be a historical fact,[8] most probably it is nothing but a poetic fancy of which other examples are known.[9]

Jayadeva's queen Rājyamatī was the daughter of Harshadeva of the Bhagadatta family, described as the lord of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kaliṅga, Kosala and other countries. This Harshadeva is usually regarded as a king of Kāmarūpa and identified with king Harshavarman, but this is very doubtful.[10] But the marriage alliances of Śivadéva and Jayadeva clearly prove that Nepāla was slowly emerging out of its secluded life in the Himālayas in order to take its legitimate place in the polity of the great country or sub-continent of which it geographically formed a part. The inscriptions clearly show that Hiuan Tsang's description[11] of the people as rude and unlettered evidently applied to the general mass of the hill tribes alone, but the cultured section in Nepal fully imbibed the religion, literature and social ideas of the Indian plains.

The Successors of Jayadeva II

For more than a century after the glorious reign of Jayadeva II we know very little of the history of Nepal. No epigraphic record of the period has yet come to light, and the account in the Vaṁśāvalīs is hopelessly confused. There are, however, external evidences to show that during this period Nepal was subjected to a series of

7 *HNI*, pp. 301-2.
8 *Ibid.*
9 *Nepal*, II, 170.
10 This has been discussed in the section ii of this chapter.
11 *HTB*, II, pp. 80-81.

foreign invasions. The earliest in point of time is an invasion by Jayāpīḍa, the ruler of Kashmir (A.D. 773-804). The romantic story narrated by Kalhaṇa may be summed up as follows:

'In the course of his campaign for world conquest, Jayāpīḍa came to Nepal, but its ruler Aramuḍi refused to submit, and took his position on the bank of a river, the water of which was only knee-deep. Jayāpīḍa and his army, while fording the river, were caught by a sudden tide. The army was destroyed and the king was made a prisoner. He was kept confined in a very high stone building on the bank of the Kālgaṇḍikā (probably the same river). There his trusted minister saw him after allaying the suspicions of the Nepal ruler by false pretensions of entering into a treaty with him against Jayāpīḍa. The minister killed himself in order that by using his body as an inflated skin the king might cross the river after jumping into it from the window. Jayāpīḍa thus crossed the river and joined his army which was kept fully equipped on the other bank by the faithful minister. He then completely defeated the ruler of Nepal and devastated the country'...[12]

The truth of this story has been doubted by most scholars. But as Lévi points out, the barbaric character of the royal name, so different from the Sanskritic names used by the kings of Nepal, shows that the story is perhaps not absolutely without foundation. For if the author invented the whole story out of pure imagination, he would have used a familiar royal name. Lévi suggests that Aramuḍi was probably a Tibetan, sent by the Tibetan king, as suzerain of Nepal, to defend the country against the attack by the king of Kashmir. He further points out that in the name of the river Kālagaṇḍikā it is easy to recognize the Kāla (or Kālī) Gaṇḍakī, the westernmost of the seven Gaṇḍakīs, which would naturally be the first barrier to an invader coming from the west.[13]

Not long after this Nepal was perhaps subjugated by the Pāla king Dharmapāla. It is perhaps the conquest of Nepal which brought the Pālas into conflict with Tibet, and led to invasions of India by successive rulers of Tibet, as will be mentioned later. Nepal must have suffered a great deal as a battle-ground of these two powerful rivals.

It is not till we come to the reign of Rāghavadeva that light dawns again upon the history of Nepal. The name of this king is found in only one Vaṁśāvalī where he is said to have introduced the Samvat or Vikrama era in Nepal. Although the name of Rāghavadeva is

12 *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, IV, vv. 531-81.
13 *Nepal*, II, pp. 176-77.

omitted from the other Vaṁśāvalīs, his existence is proved by a new chronicle discovered by Bendall.[14] What is more important still, this chronicle supplies the names of the successors of Rāghavadeva and their reign-periods, from which it may be reasonably concluded that he reigned near about A.D. 879, which is the epoch of the Newari era, current in Nepal even now. In the light of this new evidence one might regard Rāghavadeva as the founder of the Newari era, a view held by Prinsep and Cunningham, but rejected by S. Lévi. Lévi maintained that after the year 800 of the Śaka era, the Nepalese, who had a dread for the figure 8, simply dropped the figure for hundreds and began to count anew from year 1 of the ninth century of that era.[15]

If we reject this view of the adaptation of the Śaka era, we may find a very good explanation for the founding of a new era in Nepal in A.D. 879. This is the rapid decline in the power of Tibet about the middle of the ninth century A.D. to such an extent that we may well believe that the Newari era of A.D. 879 commemorates the end of Tibetan supremacy in Nepal or the commencement of the reign of Rāghavadeva who freed Nepal from the yoke of Tibet. The two events might have coincided; otherwise, the latter view seems preferable.

According to the new chronicle discovered by Bendall Rāghavadeva ruled for 46 years and 6 months, and the reigns of his three successors covered a period of 20 years. We know practically nothing about these kings. Then came Guṇakāmadeva who is credited with a long reign of 51, 65, or 85 years in different Vaṁśāvalīs. From the date of one of his successors we may reasonably conclude that Guṇakāmadeva ceased to rule before A.D. 1000. Roughly speaking we may regard his reign as covering the second half of the tenth century A.D.

The legends current in Nepal represent Guṇakāma as a great and powerful king. He is said to have founded the city of Kathmandu, though the date given, *viz.*, A.D. 723-24, is more than two centuries earlier than his time. The foundation of two other cities, Patan and Sanku, is also referred to the same period. Though Lévi prefers to take the date as right and reject the association of Guṇakāma with the foundation of Kathmandu, he nevertheless points out that Kāntipura, the old name of Kathmandu, might be easily traced to Guṇakāma, the two words *Kānti* and *Kāma* being derived from the same root. Guṇakāma is also believed to have been the founder of many religious institutions in Nepal, particularly the *yātrā* in honour of

14 *A Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper Manuscripts Belonging to the Durbar Library of Nepal* by H. P. Sastri. Introduction (p. 5) by Bendall.
15 *Nepal*, II, pp. 180 ff.

Khasarpaṇa Lokeśvara which was obviously designed to benefit Kathmandu by decreasing the importance of the *yātrā* of Matsyendranātha at Patan. He made rich donations, including two fountains of gold, to Paśupati, and brought the goddess Chaṇḍeśvarī from the east. In spite of his religious endowments on a lavish scale he is said to have amassed a fabulous wealth, which he left in the safekeeping of Nāga Vāsuki, in a cave of mount Indraśāla.

These legends perhaps reflect the transition of a mainly rural and agricultural to an urban and industrial community. The change was facilitated, if not brought about, by the intimate association of Nepal with Tibet and the plains of India. It naturally served as the medium of trade between these two regions, and thus acquired immense wealth which was spent in building temples and monasteries, and in organizing a better civic life. Nepal had now become a progressive state in every sense of the term.

II. KĀMARŪPA

Bhāskara-varman, whose history has been dealt with above, probably died about A.D. 650. So far as available evidence goes he was the last king of the dynasty which had been ruling Kāmarūpa for more than 400 years. We learn from epigraphic records of a later date that shortly or immediately after his death, a Mlechchha chief, Śālastambha by name, became the ruler of Kāmarūpa and founded a new royal line. On the other hand, we know from Chinese and Tibetan sources that Sron-btsan Gampo, who died about A.D. 650, conquered a large part of India including Kāmarūpa. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to conclude that the Tibetan conquest was the main, if not the direct, cause of the end of the old dynasty, and the rise to power of the Mlechchha chief Śālastambha. It has been suggested that Mlechchha denotes the tribe called Mech,[16] but it is perhaps better to take it in the general sense of a Mongoloid without specifying any particular tribe. The Tibetans evidently placed one of allied descent on the throne of Kāmarūpa in order to maintain their hold on the country.

It has been held by some scholars that although Śālastambha is called a Mlechchha in a later record, he was really a scion of the dynasty to which Bhāskara-varman belonged, viz., the one founded by the mythical Naraka.[17] But there seems to be little justification for the view. This will be evident from the three following passages

16 Barua, *History of Kāmarūpa*, p. 107.
17 *Ibid.*, *KS*, 19. See list of inscriptions at the end of chapter.

in epigraphic records regarding the successive families that ruled in Kāmarūpa:

1. This powerful kingdom, ruled for generations by the dynasty of Naraka, was, by a turn of adverse fate, occupied by the Mlechchha lord Śālastambha. In his family, too, were born famous kings like Vigrahastambha, twenty in number. When Tyāgasiṁha, the twenty-first king, died without any issue, the people thought that they needed a ruler of the dynasty of Naraka and so elected Brahmapāla as king (No. V, vv. 9-10).

2. In his (Naraka's) lineage was born the king with the strange name Prālambha. He, along with the preceding kings, beginning with Śālastambha and ending with Śrī-Harisha, delighted the world by his royal qualities. He (Prālambha) was succeeded by his son Harjara (No. III, vv. 7-8, 11).

3. After many kings in his (Naraka's) lineage had passed away, Śālastambha occupied the throne. After many kings of Śālastambha's family, like Pālaka and Vijaya, had passed away, flourished Harjara (No. IV, vv. 9-10).

It is not easy to reconcile the above statements. According to the first, the Naraka dynasty, dethroned by Mlechchha Śālastambha, was not restored till the time of Brahmapāla. According to the second, Prālambha, who presumably founded a new dynasty which replaced that of Śālastambha, belonged to the Naraka dynasty. But the first clearly implied that the kings intervening between Śālastambha and Brahmapāla, 21 in number, which must have included Prālambha and his successors, all belonged to the dynasty of Śālastambha. The third passage corroborates the view that Harjara, and therefore also his father Prālambha, did not belong to Śālastambha's family.

The most reasonable conclusion that may be drawn from these conflicting statements seems to be somewhat as follows:

There were three distinct royal dynasties founded, respectively, by Śālastambha, Prālambha, and Brahmapāla. There is no doubt that the first was a Mlechchha, and the third, a member of the Naraka dynasty. The position of the second is somewhat doubtful. It claimed to belong to the dynasty of Naraka, but this was not generally recognized, and the kinship was definitely disowned by the third dynasty.

We possess very little knowledge of the dynasty of Śālastambha. Inscription No. II gives us a long list of kings belonging to this dynasty. There are Vijaya, Pālaka, Kumāra, Vajradeva, Harsha-varman and Bala-varman. Reference is then made to two haughty princes named Chakra and Arathī who always flouted the commands of the

gurus on account of which the kingdom then passed to the son of the younger brothers.

This inscription then refers to Jīvadevī, the mother of Harjara, but an unfortunate lacuna prevents us from knowing her relation with the preceding ruler. It is not unlikely that she was his daughter and that would explain why Harjara, though belonging to the Naraka dynasty, was regarded by some as born in the lineage of Śālastambha. But this is a mere hypothesis for the present.

Inscription No. V supplies the name of king Vigrahastambha, which is not met with in the genealogical list given above. Another name Harisha found in inscription No. III might have been equated with Harsha-varman in the above list, but for the statement that he was the last ruler in the line of Śālastambha.

We do not know anything of these kings beyond their names. It is, however, now generally held that king Harsha-varman, mentioned in inscription No. II, was the father of Rājyamatī, queen of Jayadeva II of Nepal and was therefore the lord of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kaliṅga, and Kosala. The only ground for this identification is the description of Harsha-varman as belonging to the Bhagadatta family. For Bhagadatta was the son of Naraka, whom many kings of Kāmarūpa claim as their progenitor. It is to be noted, however, that Harsha-varman is not referred to in the Nepal inscription as the lord of Kāmarūpa, and it is very doubtful if any king of this border region could have been so powerful as to overrun Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kaliṅga, Kosala, i.e., Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and its neighbourhood on the west. Besides, as we have seen above, Harsha-varman, king of Kāmarūpa, was not probably descended from Bhagadatta, whereas there were other royal families, one in Orissa and the other in north-western frontier of India, claiming descent from Bhagadatta.[18] In view of all this it is difficult to regard Harsha-varman of Kāmarūpa, of whom we otherwise know nothing, as the father-in-law of Jayadeva II, and credit him, on that basis, with the conquest of the extensive regions mentioned above.

Prālambha, the founder of the next dynasty, flourished at the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century. The Pāla kings of Bengal are known to have conquered Kāmarūpa about this time, and the change in the royal family may not be altogether unconnected with this event. It is not unlikely, for example, that Prālambha was placed on the throne by Devapāla. But whatsoever that may be, Prālambha's son Harjara was undoubtedly a powerful ruler. This is proved by his assumption of the imperial titles *Mahārājādhirāja*,

18 *BV*, VI, 111.

Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka in his record (No. I) dated in the year 510 of the Gupta era, i.e., A.D. 829-30. There is no doubt that he freed Kāmarūpa from the yoke of the Pālas. This probably explains why his name occurs as the founder of a royal family in some records, as in the third statement quoted above. The records of Harjara-varman (Nos. I, II) bestow vague praises on him but do not contain any historical information. One of these is a land-grant issued from Hārūppeśvara, which was evidently his capital, as his successors also issued grants from the same city.[19] It has been identified with Tezpur on the Brahmaputra, about sixty or seventy miles further up from Gauhati (ancient Prāgjyotishapura) which was probably the earlier capital of the kingdom under Bhāskara-varman and his predecessors. A grandiloquent description of the city of Hārūppeśvara is given in a charter of Harjara's son Vanamāla (No. III) which records a grant of some lands to the west of the river Trisrotā. As this may be definitely identified with the modern Tista, Vanamāla's kingdom probably extended up to the Karatoyā which, in some old texts, is described as the western boundary of Kāmarūpa.[20]

Vanamāla, after having enjoyed a long reign, abdicated in favour of his son Jayamāla. Though a devotee of god Mahādeva (Śiva), Vanamāla starved himself to death in right Jaina fashion. Jayamāla ascended the throne and assumed the name Vīrabāhu. He also had a long reign and, being attacked by an incurable disease, abdicated in favour of his son Bala-varman. Both Vanamāla and Bala-varman are given imperial titles in their charters, and it may be reasonably inferred that Harjara-varman and his three successors were all powerful kings. Their reign-periods probably covered more than a century, as two of them are specifically said to have reigned for long periods. We may therefore place the end of Bala-varman's reign in the second quarter of the tenth century A.D. As Brahmapāla, the founder of the next dynasty, may be referred on palaeographic grounds to the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.,[21] Bala-varman must have had two or more successors. The last ruler of this family was Tyāgasiṁha. According to a passage in inscription No. V. quoted above, he died without any issue and with him, some time about A.D. 1000, ended the dynasty founded by Prālambha.

19 This also follows from the description of the city as *paitāmahaṁ kaṭakam* of king Bala-varman (ins. No. IV, v. 25).

20 *KS*, Introd., p. 4.

21 Dr. Hoernle referred the alphabet of the copperplates of Ratna-pāla to the first half of the eleventh century A.D. (*JASB*, 1898, Part i, p. 102). The accession of Brahmapāla, the father of Ratnapāla, may therefore be placed at the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.

SELECT LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS (KĀMARŪPA)

I. Tezpur Rock Inscription of Harjara-varman dated 510 G.E. (*JBORS*, III, p. 508).
II. Haiyungthal Cp. of Harjara-varman (*IHQ*, III, pp. 838, 841, 844).
III. Tezpur Cp. of Vanamāla (*JASB*, IX, 1840, p. 766).
IV. Nowgong Cp. of Bala-varman (*JASB*, LXVI, pp. 121, 285; LXVII, p. 103).
V. Boragaon Cp. of Ratnapāla (*JASB*, LXVII, Pt. i, p. 106).
VI. Soalkuchi Cp. of Ratnapāla (*JASB*, LXVII, Pt. i, p. 122).
(All these inscriptions are edited in the Bengali work *Kamarūpaśāsanāvalī* by MM. Padmanath Bhattacharya. This work is referred to as *KS*).

III. TIBET AND INDIA[22]

The north-eastern frontier of India, unlike the north-western, has been generally regarded as comparatively safe, as we know of no major invasion from this side during the period of which the history is fairly well known. The gradual infiltration of the Mongoloid tribes, generally pacific in character, though sometimes, as in the case of the Ahoms, effected by a regular invasion, touched only a fringe of the country. India was scarcely affected even by the mass migration of the Tibeto-Burmans from the borders of China and Tibet southwards along the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin which created the Burmese nation and the kingdom of Burma in the eleventh century. It was not till many centuries after these people had settled in Burma that their rulers threatened the eastern frontier of India. Barring the rapid advance of the Burmese towards Assam and Chittagong at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the threatened Japanese invasion of India through Manipur in the Second World War, the eastern frontier was never exposed to any serious danger.

The northern frontier, guarded by the Himālayas, is naturally regarded as more secure than the north-eastern, and according to the general belief it has never been exposed even to the dangers that occasionally threatened the latter in recent times. But this popular view is belied by history. As has been pointed out above, for more than two centuries, from *c.* 600 to 850 A.D., Tibet played an important part in Indian politics and even the Himālayas proved an ineffective barrier against her repeated aggression.[22] Curiously enough, India has no memory of these; but though unrecorded in Indian literature and even unknown to Indian tradition, the truth of Tibetan

22. Cf. Chapter *XXXIV*. The political history of Tibet and Nepal is mainly based on S. Lévi, *Le Nepal*, Vol. III, Paris, 1908.

invasions cannot be reasonably doubted, and it is not unlikely that these had a far greater influence upon the course of Indian history than we are at present prepared to concede. It is, therefore, desirable to give a general outline of the history of Tibet with special reference to its relations with India, even though it would naturally involve repetitions of what has been incidentally said above in connection with different kings and countries.

There can be scarcely any doubt that from time immemorial peoples of Mongol stock from beyond the Himālayas crossed over the range in small batches and settled in the lower slopes of this mountain. The Newaris of Nepal and perhaps other settlers in the neighbourhood of this region are very probably the results of such migration. But in historic times they had no recollection of their original home, nor kept link with their kinsmen beyond the Himālayas, who, like themselves, were divided into numerous petty clans ruling over small principalities.

All this was suddenly changed towards the end of the sixth century A.D. A chief named Sroṅ-btsan, who lived to the west of Sang-ko, re-united all these clans and founded a powerful kingdom some time between A.D. 580 and 600. The country over which he ruled was named 'Bod' which was sanskritized in the forms 'Bhoṭa' or 'Bhoṭṭa', and later transformed by the Europeans into Tibet. At the beginning of the rule of the T'ang dynasty in China (*c.* 620 A.D.) Sroṅ-btsan, king of Tibet, had a regular army of 100,000 men. He conquered various countries, including one called Gru-gu on the border of India, and is said to have extended his authority in the south-west, as far as Po-lo-men or the country of Brāhmaṇas, which is used as a vague designation for India.

The glory of the founder of Tibet is overshadowed by that of his son Sroṇ-btsan--sgam-po. According to the Tibetan Chronicles he ruled from A.D. 629 to 698, but the more reliable Chinese evidence fixes his date from A.D. 622 to 650. He sent a mission to India to learn the Indian alphabet, and introduced it in Tibet with slight modifications adapted to suit his native language. The script he then introduced still forms the basis of Tibetan alphabet. But his relation with India was not always of pacific nature. He sent an army to help Wang Hiuan-ts'o and the easy victory of the latter in India opened up before his eyes a wide vista of conquest which he was not slow to carry into effect. Next, he demanded the hand of the princess of Nepal, and Aṁśu-varman dared not refuse marriage alliance with a barbarian chief the reputation of whose great military power and conquests abroad had already reached his ears. All that he could do was to satisfy his vanity by pretending to believe in

the genealogy manufactured by the Tibetans according to which their king was descended from the Lichchhavis or the Śākyas, or the kings of Magadha and Pañchāla. The marriage took place in or before A.D. 639. The young daughter of Aṁśu-varman took with her images of the Buddhist gods and the sacred texts of the Buddhists, and was thus instrumental in introducing Buddhism into Tibet.

Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po had led a series of successful invasions against China from A.D. 634 to 641, and now demanded the hand of a Chinese princess as a condition for peace. The Chinese emperor at first refused, but ultimately had to sacrifice his scruples to the fear of the Tibetan military hosts. The new queen joined her predecessor from Nepal in placing Buddhism on a firm foundation in Tibet, which thus derived from both China and India the arts, crafts and diverse branches of knowledge that transformed the primitive people to a cultured and civilized state. Kumāra from Central India, Śilamañju from Nepāl and Tabuta and Ganuta (?) from Kāshmir introduced Indian medical science to Tibet. Buddhist scriptures were translated, and Buddhism, being adopted by the king, spread rapidly among the subjects. Sroṅ-btsan-sgam-po was recognized as the incarnation of Bodhisatva Padmapāṇi and his two queens as those of Tārā.

Nepāl at this time was a dependency of Tibet and the close and intimate cultural relation between the two led Sylvain Lévi to formulate the theory that the dates in Aṁśu-varman's charters are to be referred to an era of Tibetan origin. On the ground of some astronomical details in one of them he fixed A.D. 595 as the starting point of this era. But, as noted above, this does not agree with Hiuan Tsang's statement that Aṁśu-varman died before his visit to Nepāl in or about A.D. 637. Lévi further pointed out that the era known as *San*, and now exclusively used in Bengal, must have begun about A.D. 595 as there is a difference of 593 or 594 years between the reckoning of this and the Christian era. He, therefore, suggested that this was also the era of Tibetan origin which was used in Aṁśu-varman's charters. But this Nepalese era seems to be the Śaka era with 'five hundred' omitted and the two extreme dates of Aṁśu-varman's reign, so far definitely known, namely 30 and 40 would correspond to A.D. 508 and 618.[23]

23. For the epoch of the Era of Nepāl, Cf *JAS*, Vol. I, (1959), pp. 47-49.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION AFTER HARSHA (A. D. 650 to 750)

I. KANAUJ

1. *Wang-hiuan-tse's Expedition*

HARSHA-VARDHANA'S DEATH WAS followed by a period of anarchy. Ma-Twan-Lin[1] relates that

> 'in the twentieth year of the *Ching-kwan* period (A.D. 646), the emperor sent Wang hiuan-tse on an embassy to the kingdom of Magadha. Before he arrived king Śīlāditya had died, and his kingdom fell into a state of anarchy. One of his ministers named Na-fo-ti-a-la-na-shun (Nava...?) usurped the supreme power, and sent soldiers to oppose Wang Hiuan-tse. At this time his suite consisted only of a few dozens of cavaliers, who struggled without success, and were all taken prisoners. Soon after the usurper used violence to make other kingdoms pay him tribute.
>
> 'Hiuan-tse resolved upon action, and retired to a town on the western frontier of Tu-fan, from which he called the neighbouring kingdoms to arms. The king of Tu-fan came with a thousand soldiers, and the king of Nepal with seven thousand cavaliers. Hiuan-tse divided them into several bodies, and marched against the town of Ta-po-ho-lo, which he took by storm at the end of three days. He beheaded three thousand people, and ten thousand more were drowned. A-la-na-shun abandoned his kingdom and fled, then he collected his scattered troops, and attempted a fresh fight, but the general Jin (or Tsiang-shi-jin) took him alive, and also captured and beheaded a thousand men. The remains of the hostile army, obeying the orders of the queen, tried to stop the way upon the banks of the river Khien-to-wei: but Tsiang-shi-jin gave them battle and defeated them. He took the queen and the king's son prisoners, captured twelve thousand men and women, and twenty

1 *IA*, IX, p. 20.

thousand heads of cattle, and subdued five hundred and eighty towns, large and small.

'Shi-kieu-ma (Srīkumāra), king of Eastern India, sent him thirty thousand oxen and horses, and provisions for all his army; to which he added bows, scimitars, and collars of great value. The king of Kia-mo-lo (or Kia-pi-li) gave him some rare articles, a map of his states and several statuettes of Lao-tsu.

'Hiuan-tse took A-la-na-shun, and presented him at the gate of the palace (in the capital of China).'[2]

It follows from the above report that after the death of Harsha anarchy broke out in his kingdom and one of his ministers, whose name may be restored as Arjuna or Aruṇāśva, usurped the throne. Arjuna tried to bring the neighbouring hostile chiefs under his control, and came into conflict with a Chinese embassy led by Wang Hiuan-tse, which was on its way to Magadha. Wang Hiuan-tse, having been defeated, fled to Tufan or Tibet, which was then ruled by Srong-tsan-Gampo, one of whose queens was a Chinese princess. He organised a strong army, having received help from the king of Tibtt, king of Nepāl, and Śrīkumāra or Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa, and attacked the town called Ta-po-ho-lo variously identified with Champaran and Tirhut (Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts). Arjuna was defeated and taken prisoner to China. It is difficult to ascertain the amount of truth underlying this somewhat romantic story of the Chi-

2 The Khien-to-wei river has been restored as Gandhāra by Beal. But it seems to be identical with the Gandak. Beal thinks that Ta-po-ho-lo should be pronounced as Davahara (?). Pauthier reads it as Tu-pu-ho-lo. It is suggested that Tu (the first character) may be read 'cha' or 'tsa'. Cha-pu-ho-lo is an exact transcription of Champāran. Champāran, anciently known as Champāraṇya, is a district in northern Bihar. Smith identifies Tu-pu-ho-lo with Tirhut (Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts), ancient Tīrabhukti. Kia-mo-lo has been read by some as Kia-pi-li. Dharmapāla (*c.* A.D. 800) granted lands in Magadha from his camp at Kapila (?), cf. IA, IX, p. 20 and n. 58; *EHI*, p. 377; *EI* XXIII, p. 290; Moon-loved, king of Kia-pi-li, sent an envoy to China in A.D. 428, cf. *JRAS*, 1895, p. 540.

(For details of the Indo-Chinese Missions and the death of Harsha, see D. Devahuti, *Harsha*, Oxford, 1970, pp. 207ff. The authoress has made a critical appraisal of these missions and the events after the death of Harsha on the basis of the Chinese sources, which include a few hitherto unknown and unutilized works. She concludes: 'In spite of the initial losses and early difficulties, Wang Hsüan-t'sê's visit to India ended in success... A-lo-na-shun, though a prisoner, appears to have received considerate treatment... On presenting the rewards for his success, Wang Hsüan-t'sê was suitably honoured with promotion to the rank of Ch'ao-san-ta-fu.' *op. cit.*, pp. 228-29). (EDITOR).

nese ambassador winning brilliant victories and making extensive conquests in a far-off land with the help of a small contingent of 8000 soldiers lent by Nepal and Tibet. Possibly a small border skirmish has been magnified beyond proportion, or the Chinese general took part in a war between two or more Indian states. If the claim of Srong-tsan-Gampo to have conquered a large part of India may be taken as a historical fact, and the date of his death be taken as A.D. 650, as proposed by Lévi, his conquests must have begun prior to Wang. Hiuan-tse's visit, and the latter's so-called campagins may be really a part of that expedition. In any case, the whole episode must be regarded as obscure

2. *The Dynasty of Sayār*

We possess no other direct information regarding the history of Kanauj till the rise of Yaśovarman. *Chach-nāma,* a work of rather late period, while narrating the history of Sindh, makes some passing observations on the subject. It says[3] that Savār, son of Rāsil Rāi, was the king of Kanauj when Chach (A.D. 622-62) was ruling Sindh. Agham Lūhānah, governor of Brahmanabad, sought help from Savār, when he was attacked by Chach. But Agham Lūhānah died before he received any reply from the king of Kanauj. Savār seems to have been succeeded by his younger brother Sahiras, and Chach was succeeded by his brother Chandar. Mattah, governor of Siwistan, went to Kanauj, and pointed out to its king Sahiras, son of Rāsil, that it would be easy for him to conquer Sindh as the country was under a weak ruler Chandar. He proposed that after the conquest of the country he should be its ruler on condition of payment of tribute to the king. Sahiras replied that if he could succeed in conquering that country he would prefer to annex it to his own kingdom. Sahiras sent his brother Barhās to Kashmir to secure military help from its king who readily complied and sent an army.[4] Sahiras conquered the fort of Dew Dhanāz (or Dew-dhanush), and reached Band-kahūveh. He sent a letter to Chandar demanding his surrender. Chandar sent Dharsiah, son of Chach, to defend Brahmanabad, and himself with the assistance of Dahar, another son of Chach, made preparations for the defence of Alor. Sahiras attacked the fort of Alor but failed to capture it. He then tried some foul means to achieve his object, and invited Dahar to his camp on the pretence of having a discussion for the conclusion of a treaty. Dahar having discovered the conspiracy, took the offensive and captured Sahiras. Sahiras purchased his release

3 *Chach-nama*, English Translation by Mirza Kalichbeg Fredunbeg, p. 33; *HIED* I, p. 14"

4 The king may be identified with Durlabhaka (A.D. 662-712.

by his promise to surrender the fort of Dew Dhanāz. Nothing more is known of Sahiras.[5] We are next told that Mahammad, son of Qāsim, after his conquest of Sindh, made preparations for the invasion of Kanauj, which was then ruled by Rai Harchandar. Muhammad could not carry out his project as he was recalled by the Caliph.

Thus from the *Chach-nāma* we learn the names of four kings, viz., Rāsil Rai, Savār, Sahiras, and Rai Harchandar, who ruled Kanauj, the capital of Hind, during a period of 70 years following the death of Harsha.[6]

3. *Yaśovarman*

Yaśovarman's ancestry is unknown, but he is mentioned as a member of the lunar race in the Prakrit poetical work *Gauḍavaho*.[7] The Chinese annals[8] mention him as the king of Central India (Madhyadeśa?), and in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[9] and *Bappabhaṭṭa-charita*[10] he is referred to as the king of Kanauj. Composed by Yaśovarman's court-poet Vākpati, *Gauḍavaho* ('slaying of the king of Gauda') gives somewhat detailed information about the king's conquest of a large number of countries.[11] It tells us that at the end of the rainy season Yaśovarman, at the head of cavalry and elephant forces, went out for conquest. He reached the valley of the Son when the cold season set in, and proceeded to the Vindhya mountain, where he paid his reverence to the goddess Vindhyavāsinī. Vākpati next mentions that 'the king of the Magadhas fled before him through fear'. The multitude of the allied or feudal kings of the lord of Magadha, however, opposed Yaśovarman, but they were completely defeated. Yaśovarman, having slain the king of the Magadhas who was fleeing, proceeded to the seashore. Next Yaśovarman marched against the Vaṅgas, who were in

5 The Chalukya Vijayāditya (A.D. 680-99), king of Badami, defeated the king of Uttarāpatha. According to the Southerners Uttarāpatha included the Uttar Pradesh.

6 A Chinese authority relates that Ti-mo-si-na (Bhīmasena ?), king of Central India, sent an embassy to the Chinese emperor in A.D. 692. (K.A.N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India*, p. 116).

It is difficult to reconstruct the history of Kanauj on the basis of the story in *Chach-nāma*, as it is not corroborated by any reliable evidence (EDITOR).

7 *Gauḍavaho*, ed. Shankar Pandurang Pandit, Bom. Sans. Series, XXXIV, v. 1065. *Bappabhaṭṭasūri-charita*, a work of the 14th century, says that Yaśovarman belonged to the dynasty of Chandragupta of the Maurya *gotra* (*JBBRAS*, 1928, III, pp. 103.)

8 Ma-Twan-Lin relates that 'In the Khai-yuen period (A.D. 713-42) an ambassador came from Central India, and asked for troops to punish the To-shi (Tazi=Arabs) and the Tu-fan (Tibetans).' *IA*, IX, p. 21. Sastri, *Foreign Notices*, p. 117. Also cf. Stein, *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, I, 132, n. 134.

9 *Ibid*, p. 132.

10 *JBBRAS*, III, 1928, p. 103.

11 *Gauḍavaho*. A summary of its contents with reference to verses is given in the 'Introduction', pp. XVII-XXXIII.

possession of a large number of warlike elephants, and defeated them. After this victory, Vākpati continues, Yaśovarman proceeded by the road across the Malaya mountain (Sahyādri mountain) and extorted submission from the kings of the southern quarters. He then marched against the Pārasikas and defeated them in a severe battle. After this Yaśovarman levied tribute in those regions which were made inaccessible by the western mountains. He then proceeded to the bank of the Narmadā and went thence to Maru (Marwar), Śrīkaṇṭha (Thanesar) and the city of Hariśchandra (Ayodhyā). He next subdued the people of the Mandāra mountain, probably the Himalayan ranges to the east of Garhwal, and even proceeded further towards the north. At the conclusion of his extensive conquests Yaśovarman returned to his capital.

The main theme of *Gauḍavaho*, as the title indicates, is to glorify Yaśovarman for the laurels he won by slaying the king of Gauḍa. But, strangely enough, the poem does not mention anything about the king of Gauḍa, or the slaying of any king other than that of Magadha by Yaśovarman. Hence the commentator Haripāla[12] seems to be right in taking the king of Magadha as identical with the king of Gauḍa who, according to *Bappabhatta-charita*, a late work, was Dharma. Some are inclined to identify the Gauḍa king with Jīvitagupta II, the last known king of the Later Gupta dynasty of Magadha.[13]

There are some evidences to show that the statement of Vākpati regarding the extensive conquests made by Yaśovarman cannot be dismissed as merely a panegyric of the court-poet. A stone inscription[14] found in the ruins of Nālandā was issued by Mālada. He was the son of Yaśovarman's minister Tikina, the ruler of Udīchī-deśa and

12 *Ibid.*, p. 235.

13 According to others, the Gauḍa adversary of Yaśovarman was a chief of the Śaila dynasty of the Vindhya region who, as the Ragholi plate (*EI*. IX, p. 46) states, occupied Puṇḍra after killing its king. *Bappabhaṭṭa-charita* says that Yaśovarman invaded Gauḍa, killed its king, and took the poet Vākpati prisoner. Vākpati secured his release by writing the poem *Gauḍavaho*. The same authority makes it clear that Yaśovarman's adversary Dharma was distinct from the king Dharma, who was a contemporary of Yaśovarman's son Āma (*JBBRAS*, III, p. 321).

14 *EI*. XX, p. 37. Hirananda Sastri, who has edited this inscription, thinks that the record belongs to the time of king Bālāditya, who was the adversary of the Hūṇa Mihirakula (*c*. A.D. 530). He suggests that the Yaśovarman of the inscription is identical with Yaśodharman who warred with this Hūṇa chief, and holds that the name Yaśodharman in the Mandasor inscription is an error for Yaśovarman. But there is nothing in the inscription to suggest that it was issued during the reign of Bālāditya. As the inscription, from the palaeographic point of view, is to be placed in the 8th century A.D., the king Yaśovarman, mentioned there, is to be identified with the hero of the *Gauḍavaho*. R. C. Majumdar *IHQ*, VII, p. 699; VIII, p. 37; Bhandarkar's *List* No 2105.

the guardian of the frontier. The way in which Yaśovarman has been described in the inscription leaves no scope for doubt that he was in possession of Nālandā. The city named Yaśovarmapura,[15] mentioned in the Ghoshrawa inscription of Devapāla, king of the Pāla dynasty, identified with Bihar-Shariff by some, and Ghoshrawa close to that locality by others, not far off from Nālandā, is suggested by some to have been founded by the king Yaśovarman. All this corroborates in general *Gauḍavaho*'s statement relating to Yaśovarman's conquest of Magadha. If the king of Magadha was identical with the king of Gauda: Yaśovarman's victory over Magadhan king made him master of the latter country also. As Vaṅga bordered the Gauḍa country, it was not difficult for Yaśovarman to force his way into that country. His adversary there, however, cannot be identified.

Udīchī, which was administered by Yaśovarman's subordinate Tikina, is identical with Uttarāpatha.[16] It extended from Pehowa, in the Karnal district, Haryana, to Jālalabad in Afghanistan. Hirananda Sastri takes it to mean the old North-Western Frontier Province. Thus a large portion of Haryana and the Panjab and possibly a part of the North-Western Frontier Province were included in the empire of Yaśovarman. This explains why a large number of Yaśovarman's coins have been found in the Panjab, one of them hailing from a *stūpa at* Mānikyāla, in Rawalpindi, Panjab: *Bappabhaṭṭa-charita*[17] relates that Vākpati composed a poem *Madra-mahī-vijaya* (conquest of the Madra country) at Kanauj in the court of Yaśovarman's son, Āma. As the poem is not available, it cannot be said definitely whether Yaśovarman or his son Āma is the hero of the poem. Madra was the country, the capital of which was Śākala (modern Sialkot, in the Panjab, Pakistan). In view of the fact that Yaśovarman was in possession of the Panjab, and that Āma was not probably strong enough to launch any extensive campaign, it may be held that the poem narrates Yaśovarman's conquest of the Madra country.

If the above observations are correct, it will follow that Yaśovarman's empire extended from North Bengal to the North-West Frontier Province.

A Chinese authority[18] states that I-cha-fon-mo (Yaśovarman), king

15 *IA*, XVII, pp. 307-21: VIII, p. 76; *ASIR*, III, pp. 120, 135.

16 The Ghoshrawa stone inscription of the Pāla Devapāla's reign states that Indragupta was born in Nagarahāra, the ornament of Uttarāpatha. Indragupta's son Vīradeva became the chief of the Nālandā monastery. Vīradeva, by his benevolent works, attached the banner of his fame to his two families (*vaṁśau*-paternal and maternal), residing in Udīchīpatha (*IA*. XVII, p. 307). This proves beyond doubt that Uttarāpatha and Udīchī are identical.

17 *JBBRAS*, III, 1927-28, p. 321.

18 *Rājataraṅginī*, Stein, I, p. 132.

of Central India, sent his minister Sang-po-ta to the Chinese court in A.D. 731. It is known from Tang annals that an embassy of Muktāpīḍa (Lalitāditya), king of Kashmir, related to the Chinese court that his master already blocked the five routes to Tibet in alliance with the king of Central India some time between A.D. 736 and 747. This king of Central India (Madhya-deśa) is evidently Yaśovarman. Yaśovarman's expedition into the interior of Himālaya beyond Garhwal, as mentioned in the *Gauḍavaho,* was probably undertaken with a view to effecting the blockade of the routes from Tibet.

In view of the great political power of Yaśovarman, the statement of *Gauḍavaho* regarding his conquest of the Vindhya region, which was at that time ruled by a Śaila dynasty,[19] his victory over some south Indian chiefs and the Pārasikas, apparently the Arabs of Sindh, and his conquest of Maru or Marwar may also be taken to be based on some historical truth, though corroborative evidence is lacking. It is also probable that the kingdom of Kāśī which declared independence soon after the death of Harsha was conquered by Yaśovarman.[20] Yaśovarman was undoubtedly one of the greatest kings of his age. Few kings after the Imperial Guptas are known to have succeeded in asserting their supremacy over the vast tract of country extending from North Bengal to the North-West Frontier Province. But Yaśovarman could not enjoy the rule of his empire for long. According to Kalhaṇa, Lalitāditya subsequently grew jealous of Yaśovarman's power and attacked Gādhipura (Kanauj). Yaśovarman, king of Kānyakubja, first fled and then submitted, and a treaty was concluded between the two monarchs. But when Lalitāditya saw in the treaty the name of Yaśovarman preceding his own, he felt insulted, invaded Kanauj, and uprooted Yaśovarman. The land of Kānyakubja from the banks of the Yamunā to the Kālikā was annexed to the kingdom of Kashmir.[21]

19 *EI,* IX, p. 41.

20 A badly mutilated inscription at Sārnāth (near Benares) mentions a king Prakaṭāditya, two or three of whose ancestors are named Bālāditya (*CII,* III, p. 84). Fleet assigns the inscription, on palaeographical grounds, to the end of the seventh century A.D., and suggests that 'the first Bālāditya is the one who is so well known in connection with the history of Mihirakula'. This can hardly be accepted without further evidence, and the predecessors of Prakaṭāditya seem to have been vassals of the Maukharis and Harsha-vardhana. Nothing is known about his successors. It is known from the Ragholi plate (*EI,* IX, p. 46) that in the early years of the eighth century a king of the Śaila dynasty killed the cruel kings of Kāśī, and took possession of it. Yaśovarman of Kanauj asserted his supremacy over Kāśī in the second quarter of the eighth century.

21 Stein, *op cit*, I, pp. 132 ff; Stein identifies the Kālikā with the Kālindī which falls in the Gaṅgā near Kanauj.

Kalhaṇa's report relating to Yaśovarman's signal defeat at the hand of Lalitāditya may be accepted as true. Yaśovarman's attempt to bring about political unification of Northern India thus met with failure. His rise to power was as sudden as his disappearance from the political arena. With the collapse of his sovereignty Kanauj lost its supreme position as a political power for more than three quarters of a century.

Yaśovarman, who came to the throne after Harachandra[21a] who was in possession of Kanauj in A.D. 714, made an alliance with Lalitāditya of Kashmir some time between A.D. 725 and 747 and is known to have been ruling in A.D. 731. According to the Jaina chronicle of the fourteenth century his reign ended some time between A.D. 750 and 754,[22] but according to modern scholars his defeat and dethronement took place between A.D. 736 and 747.[23] The reign of Yaśovarman may thus be placed between A.D. 715 and 745.

Yaśovarman was a man of learning. The authorship of a drama named *Rāmābhyudaya* has been ascribed to him by the writers of the tenth and eleventh centuries. He is also said to have composed some verses[24] and he was a great patron of poets. *Rājataraṅgiṇi*

21a For Harachandra, see p. 594, footnote 6 (remarks by the Editor) (EDITOR).

22 *Bappabhaṭṭa-Sūri-prabandha*, a chapter in the *Prabandha-kośa* written by Rājaśekhara-Sūri in V.S. 1405 (A.D. 1349), relates that Yaśovarman was the king of Kānyakubja and Gopagiri (Gwalior). He banished his queen Yaśodevī, who gave birth to her son Āma while in exile Āma was brought up by the Jaina teacher Siddhasena at Moḍherakapura. Yaśodevī and Āma were subsequently restored to Yaśovarman's favour, but Āma was later expelled from the court as he was a spendthrift. Āma went back to Siddhasena who educated him along with Bappabhaṭṭa. At this time, in V.S. 807 (A.D. 750). Bappabhaṭṭa was initiated. Some time afterwards Yaśovarman fell ill, called back Āma, and declared him his successor. After the death of Yaśovarman, Āma became king at Gopagiri. Some time after Āma had ascended the throne, Bappabhaṭṭa was made a Suri in V.S. 811 (A.D 757). Hence the date of Āma's accession, according to this source, is to be placed between A.D. 750 and 754. Āma died in V.S. 890 (A.D. 833), and was succeeded by his son Dunduka. He was murdered by his son Bhoja, who took possession of the kingdom (*Gauḍavaho*, Intr., p. cxxiii).

Bappabhaṭṭa-charita, as contained in the *Prabhāvaka-charita*, written by Chandraprabhasūri, agrees in general with the above account in relating the career of Āma. It states that Āma succeeded Yaśovarman on the throne of Kanauj, and assumed the name Nāgāvaloka. Āma-Nāgāvaloka died in A.D. 833 and was succeeded by his son Dunduka, who was murdered by his son Bhoja. Bhoja captured the throne of Kanauj shortly after the death of Bappabhaṭṭa in V.S. 885 (A.D. 828), (*JBBRAS*, III, N.S. 1927-28, pp. 101, 313). The history of Āma, as given by the Jaina chronicles, is unauthentic and is at variance with the known history of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras dealt with in Ch. XXII.

23 This is the view of Lévi and Chavannes (*JA*, 1895, p. 353).

24 Dhanika's *Daśarūpa*, ed. Haas, Columbia University Series, I, v. 90, p. 27; *Priyadarśikā*, Columbia U.S., Intr., p. XXXVII; *Sāhitya-Darpaṇa* by Visvanatha Kaviraja; p. 427.

relates that the poets Vākpatirāja, Bhavabhūti and others adorned the court of Yaśovarman.[25]

II. THE LATER GUPTAS

Reference has been made already (p. 195) to the tragic end of Mahāsena-gupta and his kingdom. We have also seen how his two sons Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta found refuge in the court of Thāneśvar and became the companions, respectively, of Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana. We do not hear of them during the long reign of Harsha save a passing reference to the consecration by him of one Kumāra, who may be identified with this Kumāra-gupta.

The first half of the seventh century A.D. is thus almost a complete blank in the history of the Later Guptas. When the curtain lifts again we see Mādhava-gupta on the throne of Magadha, evidently by the grace of Harsha. There is no evidence that Kumāra or his brother even ruled in Mālava. As we shall see later, Harsha did not probably conquer Magadha before A.D. 641. The accession of Mādhava-gupta must therefore be placed some time after that date. It is likely from what has been stated above, that the elder brother Kumāra-gupta was first anointed king, probably of Magadha. This is not disproved by the absence of any reference to him in the Aphsad inscription, for it merely traces the succession and does not profess to give a complete genealogy of the Later Gupta kings. In that case either he died without any issue, or Mādhava-gupta was specially selected by Harsha to succeed Kumāra on account of the long-standing attachment between the two.

The Aphsad inscription bestows high encomiums on Mādhava-gupta in general terms and refers to his military success against enemies. It is likely that he distinguished himself in the wars of Harsha-vardhana. The following passage in this connection deserves special notice: '(My) mighty enemies have been slain by me in battle; there remains nothing more for me to do; thus, he, the hero, determined in his mind, (and then) with the desire to associate himself with the glorious Harshadeva...' On account of the unfortunate lacuna at the end it is difficult to interpret the passage correctly. But it seems to convey that after finishing his worldly duties Mādhava-gupta died, as if from a desire to join in the other world Harsha-deva who had been his life-long associate in this world.[26] In any case, we may put the

25 Stein, *op. cit.*, I, p. 134, *bk.* IV. v. 144.

26 R. G. Basak takes this passage to mean that Mādhavagupta desired to form an alliance with Harsha (*HNI*, second edition, pp. 148-49). But this is hardly compatible with the view, taken above, that he was associated with Harsha since his boyhood.

death of Mādhava-gupta shortly after that of Harsha, i.e., about A.D. 650.

So long as Harsha was alive the Later Gupta king of Magadha was his feudatory. But the death of Harsha and the consequent dismemberment of his empire gave a splendid opportunity to Ādityasena, son of Mādhava-gupta, to extend his kingdom and to increase his power and authority.

Besides the Aphsad inscription, to which frequent reference has been made, at least three other records of the time of Ādityasena are known.[27] All the four were found in South and East Bihar and record pious donations, one in Nālandā, and the others in the Gayā and Bhagalpur districts. There is thus no doubt that Ādityasena ruled in Magadha and Aṅga. In two of these records Ādityasena is styled *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*, which not only proves that he enjoyed independent status, but also probably shows that he extended his power beyond the frontiers of Magadha and Aṅga.

Reference may be made in this connection to an inscription on the porch of the famous temple of Vaidyanātha at Deoghar.[28] The stone bearing this inscription was probably originally fixed to a temple on the Mandar Hill where two other inscriptions of Ādityasena's queen Koṇadevī were found. It is written in mediaeval character and purports to be the chapter (*prakaraṇa*) on the Mandāragiri, i.e., an extract from a book of the type of *māhātmyas* which describe the glory of the different sites in a sacred locality. The whole of it, however, really forms an eulogy of Ādityasena. He is described as the ruler of the whole earth up to the shores of the oceans, and performer of three *Aśvamedhas* and other great sacrifices, including one in which he gave away his own weight of gold a thousand times over together with a crore of horses. The object of the inscription is to record the building of a temple of Nṛihari (Vishṇu) by king Ādityasena and his consort the glorious Koshadevī at a cost of 30,000 large jewels and three *lacs* of gold (coins of the kind called) *ṭaṅkakas*. All these acts were done after the king had returned (*lit.* arrived) from the Chola city (Cholapura).

The name of the queen Koshadevī is obviously a misreading, or error on the part of the engraver, for Koṇadevī, the name of the queen of Ādityasena. There is no doubt, therefore, that this king is referred to in the chapter on Mandāragiri. How far its account can be regarded as historical is difficult to say, but it certainly proves that the name

27 These are the Shahpur Stone Image inscription and two identical inscriptions on the Mandar Hill (*CII*, III, pp. 208-12.)

28 *CII*, III, p. 212 n.

and fame of Ādityasena as a very rich and powerful king, who performed various Vedic sacrifices, was preserved for nearly a thousand years after his death. This must be regarded as very unusual, and it is not unlikely that the Vaidyanātha temple inscription is a later copy of an old record.

The reference to the Chola city is interesting. Whether it means the capital city of the Cholas in the South and, if so, why Ādityasena went to that remote locality, are alike now unknown. The passage seems to imply that Ādityasena returned from a victorious expedition to the Chola city with enormous treasure which he spent for the sacrifices and religious buildings. In that case, the probability is that the Chola city denoted a locality not very far from Magadha.[28a]

Although we know but few details of his reign, there is no doubt that Ādityasena raised the power and prestige of his family. Henceforth all the kings of the dynasty use the glorious titles of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*. They certainly ruled over southern Bihar, but we cannot define, even approximately, the limits of the kingdom.[29]

One of the inscriptions of Ādityasena, found at Shahpur (Patna district), contains a date which has been differently read by various scholars. Fleet's reading, 66, is now generally accepted, but cannot be regarded as certain. The year 66, if referred to the Harsha era, corresponds to A.D. 672, which would be quite suitable for Ādityasena as his father was more or less of the same age as Harsha.

We learn from an inscription of Jayadeva II, king of Nepal, that his mother Vatsadevī was the daughter of Bhoga-varman of the Maukhari dynasty, and the daughter's daughter of Ādityasena, king of Magadha. This shows that in place of age-long rivalry the Later Guptas had now friendly relations with the Maukharis.[30] Ādityasena's name is also mentioned by I-tsing as 'Sun-army'. We are told that

28a The argument is not very convincing (EDITOR).

29 R. G. Basak thinks that 'Bengal, specially the southern Rāḍha and Vaṅga, might have come under his domination' (*HNI*, p. 151). H. C. Raychaudhuri thinks that 'he ruled over a wide territory *extending to the shores of the oceans*' (*PHAI*, p. 516). This is evidently based on the Deoghar inscription but such expressions cannot be taken literally, H. C. Raychaudhuri also thinks that either Ādityasena or his son is the *Sakalottarāpatha-nātha*, 'lord of the whole of North India', who was defeated by the Chālukya kings Vinayāditya (A.D. 680-96) and Vijayāditya, (*ibid*). But this is very doubtful and the reference may well be to Yaśovarman.

30 Of the sections dealing with Nepal and the Maukharis in Chap. VIII, H. C. Raychaudhuri says that Bhogavarman, who married the daughter of Ādityasena, 'presumably became his subordinate ally' (*PHAI*, p. 516). But we do not know the status of Bhogavarman, and the marriage-alliance does not necessarily indicate his subordination.

'recently' this king built a temple for the Buddhists not very far from the Mahābodhi temple at Gayā.[31]

The names of three successors of Ādityasena are known. These are Deva-gupta, Vishṇu-gupta and Jīvita-gupta II.[32] They all bear imperial titles, but hardly anything is known of them. While we know from the Mangraon inscription of Vishṇu-gupta that he ruled for at least 17 years, the inscription found at the Kaulesvari hill, Hazaribagh, is the first 'Later Gupta' epigraph discovered in the Hazaribagh district, showing Vishṇugupta's sway over the region.[33] The inscription of Jīvita-gupta II, which gives the complete genealogy from Mādhava-gupta, was issued from the victorious camp situated near the fort of Gomatīkoṭṭaka. If this fort, as the name implies, was on the bank of the river Gomati,[34] we must presume that the Later Gupta kingdom at this time embraced a part of Uttara Pradesh.

There are good reasons to believe that Jīvita-gupta II was the king of Magadha who was defeated and killed by Yaśovarman. The Prākṛit poem *Gauḍavaho,* which describes the exploits of Yaśovarman, seems to imply that this king of Magadha was also the lord of Gauḍa. But this view, though generally accepted, cannot be definitely proved. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the adversary of Yaśovarman was the king of Gauḍa who had conquered Magadha, for otherwise there is no justification for the title of the poem which means 'slaying of Gauḍa'.[35] In any event the end of the Later Gupta dynasty is obscure, and we cannot trace the causes or circumstances of its decline and downfall which probably took place in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D.

III. BENGAL

1. *Gauḍa*

The empire of Śaśāṅka and the political eminence to which he had raised Bengal did not long survive his death. Although details are lacking, there seems to be little doubt that within a few years a large part of Bengal passed into the hands of Bhāskara-varman, while the

31 Beal, *Life,* p. xxxvi.

32 Cf. Deo-Baranark inscription of Jīvita-gupta, *CII,* III, p. 213.

33. For the Mangraon ins. see *JBRS,* XXX. Part ii and *EI,* XXVI, pp. 241 ff, and for the Kaulesvari hill inscription, see *EI,* XXX, pp. 84 ff.

34 This was suggested by Fleet (*CII,* III, p. 215) and has been accepted by others (*PHAI,* p. 516) as an evidence that 'the Later Guptas, and not the Maukharis, dominated about this time the Gomatī valley in the Madhyadeśa'. But this cannot be regarded as certain.

35 Cf. *HNI,* p. 131, *HBR.* I, pp. 82, 94.

rest of Śaśāṅka's dominions, such as Koṅgoda, Orissa, and Bihar were conquered by Harsha-vardhana.

It appears that the political disintegration of Bengal commenced even before the conquest of Bhāskara-varman. Hiuan Tsang, who visited this part of the country about A.D. 638, shortly after the death of Śaśāṅka, specifically refers to four separate kingdoms in Bengal, viz., Puṇḍravardhana, Karṇasuvarṇa, Tāmralipti and Samataṭa, corresponding roughly to Northern, Western, Southern, and Eastern Bengal. He mentions the capital of each of these, but does not say anything about its political status. It would be unreasonable to infer from Hiuan Tsang's silence that all these were comprised within Harsha's empire. For, apart from obvious objections against any such general conclusion, there are good grounds to believe that these territories or portions thereof formed a part of the dominions of Bhāskara-varman and not of Harsha, as mentioned earlier (p. 255). We may thus infer from Hiuan Tsang's description that the death of Śaśāṅka loosened the bonds which had united the whole, or a considerable part, of Bengal, and this paved the way for its conquest by Bhāskara-varman about the same time when Harsha conquered Kajaṅgala (near Rajmahal) and Orissa, and obviously also the region in West Bengal intervening between the two. The river Bhāgīrathī was probably the boundary between the two dominions.[35a]

The *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*,[36] an enigmatic Buddhist chronicle of a later date, seems to refer to the events of the period in a passage which has been translated as follows: 'After the death of Soma the Gauḍa political system (*Gauḍa-tantra*) was reduced to mutual distrust, raised weapons and mutual jealousy—one (king) for a week; another for a month; then a republican constitution... Thereafter Soma's son Mānava will last for 8 months 5 (½ ?) days.' Soma undoubtedly refers to Śaśāṅka, and the passage evidently portrays the political disintegration which was either the cause or the effect, perhaps both, of the invasions of Harsha-vardhana and Bhāskara-varman. It appears that Mānava, a son of Śaśāṅka, tried to restore the fallen fortunes of his family, but without success. But soon the situation was somewhat retrieved by one Jayanāga, who is known both from coins and inscriptions. He is styled *Mahārājādhirāja* in his copper-plate grant,[37] and was evidently a ruler of some authority. He cer-

35a We cannot altogether exclude the possibility that the conquests of Bhāskara-varman took place after the death of Harsha (cf. *IIH*, XXXI, pp. 111-17) (EDITOR).

36 *IHI*, pp. 50-51.

37 *EI*, XVIII, p. 60.

tainly ruled over Birbhum and Murshidabad districts, but neither the extent of his kingdom nor any detail of his reign is known.

The political disintegration of Bengal continued for nearly a century (A.D. 650-750), which may justly be regarded as a dark period in the history of Bengal. We can imagine a series of foreign invasions which perhaps completely destroyed its political integrity. To begin with it must have been affected by the Chinese and Tibetan invasions which followed the death of Harsha[37a] (pp. 591-92) and also by the re-establishment of the Later Guptas in Magadha. Some scholars hold that 'the supremacy of Tibet was so firmly established in Bengal that, for 200 years, the Bay of Bengal, was known as the Sea of Tibet'.[38] Others are of opinion that Bengal, or at least a large part of it, was included in the empire of Ādityasena.[39] But both these views lack positive evidence. We learn from an inscription[40] of the Śaila king, Jayavardhana, that the brother of his great-grandfather defeated the Pauṇḍra king and conquered his dominions. The Pauṇḍra kingdom probably denoted North Bengal and the Śaila conquest may be referred to the early part of the eighth century A.D. As mentioned earlier (p. 595), the king of Gauḍa was defeated and killed by Yaśovarman who next conquered Vaṅga.

There are good grounds to believe that Lalitāditya (p. 597), king of Kashmir, also established his authority in Gauḍa. Kalhaṇa has preserved a memorable anecdote in connection with Lalitāditya's suzerainty over Bengal. It is said that once Lalitāditya asked the king of Gauḍa to visit Kāshmir. Being suspicious of his intentions, the king of Gauḍa made Lalitāditya swear by an image of Vishṇu that no violence would be done to his person. In spite of this, Lalitāditya had murdered the Gauḍa king treacherously. In order to take revenge for this foul crime, a few faithful followers of the Gauḍa king, undertook the long journey from Bengal to Kāshmir, attacked the temple of Vishṇu mentioned already, and broke one of the two images it contained—unhappily the wrong one—though they were all cut to pieces by the soldiers of Kashmir. This heroic devotion to a dead master has elicited the highest praise from Kalhaṇa.[41]

The same historian has recorded another romantic tale which has some bearing upon the history of Bengal. It is said that Jayāpīḍa, grandson of Lalitāditya, wandering *incognito* (p. 536), married

37a This is hardly compatible with the author's views on the "so-called campaigns" of Wang-Hiuan-tse's, in pp. 591-92 (EDITOR)

38 Sastri, *Foreign Notices*, p. 116.

39 *HNI*, p. 151.

40 *EI*, IX, p. 41.

41 *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, IV, 323-35

Kalyāṇadevī, the daughter of Jayanta, the ruler of Puṇḍra-vardhana. and made his father-in-law the supreme ruler by defeating five chiefs of Gauḍa. The existence of five Gauḍa chiefs fully answers to the political disintegration of Bengal, as noted already, but Jayanta either as a local chief, or as a supreme ruler in Bengal, is otherwise unknown.

In addition to the series of foreign invasions of Bengal, mentioned earlier, we have an indirect reference to another. An inscription of king Jayadeva II of Nepal, dated 153, which may be equivalent to A.D. 759 or 748 (p. 580), describes the king's father-in-law, Harsha of the Bhagadatta dynasty, as the lord of Gauda, Udra, Kaliṅga, and Kosala. This Harsha is usually taken to be a ruler of Kāmarūpa but this cannot be regarded as certain (p. 581). But as the 'Bhagadatta dynasty' is never known to have ruled in Bengal, the lord of Gauda whose daughter was married to king Jayadeva II of Nepal, could only establish his claim to this title by a conquest of the country.

There is no positive evidence that any of these foreigners could consolidate their political authority, far less establish any permanent rule, in Gauda. But the case seems to have been somewhat different in Samataṭa or Vaṅga, i.e., Eastern Bengal. We learn from Hiuan Tsang that a line of Brāhmaṇa kings ruled in Samataṭa in the first half of the seventh century A.D., and that Śīlabhadra, the head of the Nālandā monastery in his days, was a scion of this ruling family. But towards the close of that century we find a new royal family in this region whose history is known from three records. They disclose the names of three rulers, viz., Khaḍgodyama, his son Jātakhaḍga, and the latter's son Devakhaḍga, who ruled in the Tippera district and the region round it. The somewhat outlandish epithet *khaḍga* seems to indicate that the rulers were probably foreigners, but R. G. Basak thinks that the surname *khaḍga* may have represented an indigenous Kshatriya family of East Bengal and is not an outlandish name.[42] The *Khaḍka* clan played a pominent role in the history of Nepal and founded the Gurkhā dynasty in the sixteenth century. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Khaḍga dynasty of Bengal also originally belonged to Nepal and came to Bengal in the course of the joint Tibeto-Nepalese expeditions referred to in (p. 591). The Chinese pilgrim I-tsing alludes to a contemporary king of Eastern India named Devavarman, who was a Buddhist devotee as well as his son Rājabhaṭa. This king has been identified by some with Devakhaḍga who was also a Buddhist. Others, however, identify Devavarman with Devagupta of the Later Gupta dynasty mentioned earlier, (p. 599). The former

42 *HNI*, p. 255.

view, however, seems more reasonable, and in that case the rule of the Khaḍga dynasty may be placed approximately between A.D. 650 and 700.[43]

Two other families are known to have been ruling in the same region and about the same time as the Khaḍgas. The Tippera Grant of Lokanātha of about the middle of the seventh century A.D. discloses the history of four or five generations of *Sāmantas* (feudatories) of the Nātha family. Lokanātha, the ablest of them, was 'strong in men and money' and seems to have ruled over the Tippera region. A certain Jīvadhāraṇa, mentioned in this inscription as an erstwhile enemy of Lokanātha, is identical with *Samataṭeśvara* (Lord of Samataṭa) Jīvadhāraṇa Rāta, of the Kailan Copper-plate Grant. Jīvadhāraṇa was the father of Śrīdharaṇa Rāja, also styled *Samataṭeśvara*, and the grantor of the Kailan Plate. Thus it appears that both Lokanātha and Jīvadhāraṇa were contemporaneous and refractory feudatories of a common overlord, and in the conflict between them the latter submitted to the former. In any case, these Nātha and Rāta families appear to have ruled in the Tippera region in the second half of the seventh century A.D.[44]

Lāmā Tāranātha[45] gives a graphic account of the political disintegration of Bengal about this period. Although he flourished in the sixteenth century A.D. he must have had access to some fairly authentic source of information, now lost to us. According to him, Govichandra and Lalitachandra, two kings of the Chandra dynasty, ruled in Vaṅga during the last part of the seventh and the first part of the eight century A.D. If we believe in this statement, we may hold that it was during the reign of Lalitachandra that Yaśovarman invaded Vaṅga, as mentioned in (p. 596). The author of *Gauḍavaho*, in recording this incident, pays high compliment to the people of Vaṅga, whose faces, we are told, 'assumed a pale colour while offering obeisance to the victor, because they were not accustomed to such an act' (v. 420). The suzerainty of Yaśovarman over Vaṅga was probably very nominal, and neither Lalitāditya nor Harsha, who exercised supremacy over Gauḍa, is known to have conquered Vaṅga.

43 For an account of the Khaḍga dynasty with full reference to original source, cf. *HABM*, pp. 78-81.

44 *IHQ*, XXIII, p. 221; also see *HNI* (2nd edn), p. 244f. cf. *HABM*, pp. 80-81 for discussion with full references.

45 Lāmā Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism* has been translated in German by A. Schiefner. For English translation Cf. *IA*, IV, pp. 361 ff. For the account of Bengal, cf. *IHQ*, XVI, pp. 219 ff. and *HBR*, p. 182.

But although Vaṅga might have fared somewhat better than Gauḍa in respect of foreign conquests, there is no doubt that, generally speaking, almost a complete political chaos prevailed in Bengal towards the middle of the eighth century A.D. According to Tāranātha anarchy and confusion prevailed to such an extent after the death of Lalitachandra, that there was no central political authority and 'every Kshatriya, grandee, Brāhmaṇa, and merchant was a king in his own house.' This picture of the political condition of Bengal about A.D 750 is strikingly confirmed by contemporary epigraphic evidence, as we shall see later in Chapter XXIII.

IV. MAITRAKAS OF VALABHĪ

Whatever might have been the political status of the kingdom of Valabhī during the reign of Dhruvasena II (p. 263), there is no doubt that it attained complete independence, and even claimed imperial status, under his son and successor Dharasena IV, who ascended the throne some time before the death of Harsha. His known dates range from A.D. 645 to 649 and he is the earliest known member of the Maitraka dynasty to assume the title *Mahārājādhirāja Chakravartī.* Two of his inscriptions[46] were issued from Bharukachchha. It may be inferred from this that after the downfall of the Kalachuris of Mālava, Lāṭa transferred its allegiance to the Maitrakas Other inscriptions of the king prove that he held sway over Kaira, Valabhī and Saurāshṭra. He was the patron of the well-known poet Bhaṭṭi, and was succeeded by Dhruvasena III, the youngest son of Ḍerabhaṭa, and the grandson of Śīlāditya Dharmāditya. He was on the throne in A.D. 653, and was succeeded by Kharagraha II, the second son of Ḍerabhaṭa, whose inscription is dated A.D. 656. Kharagraha II's successor was Śīlāditya III, the eldest son of Ḍerabhaṭa. Dates of his inscriptions range from A.D. 662 to 676, with one date doubtfully read as 684. His inscriptions prove his supremacy over Saurāshṭra, Valabhī, and Kaira. A Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty held away over southern Mālava in the second half of the seventh century,[47] probably by ousting the Maitrakas. Śīlāditya III was succeeded by his son, the *Mahārājādhirāja* Śīlāditya IV, the dates of whose inscriptions range from A.D. 691 to 706. It is known from the Chinese source that in A.D. 692 Chi-lo-ito (Śīlāditya), king of Western India, sent a representative to China with presents to pay homage to the emperor.[48] The king of Western India referred to was

46 *IA*, VII, p. 73, XV, p. 339.
47 *EI*, VIII, p. 163.
48 Sastri, *Foreign Notices*, p. 116.

in all probability Śīlāditya IV. Śīlāditya IV's successor was his son Śīlāditya V, whose inscription is dated A.D. 722. About this time Mālava passed into the hands of the Pratīhāra Nāgabhaṭa I (pp. 615 ff) It was probably during the reign of Śīlāditya V that the Arabs under Junaid invaded the city of Valabhī. On that occasion the prestige of the Maitrakas was saved by Jayabhaṭa IV of Lāṭa. Śīlāditya V was succeeded by his son Śīlāditya VI, an inscription[49] of whose reign, dated A.D. 760, was issued from Godrahaka (Godhrā, in the Panch Mahals, Rewa Kantha). Śīlāditya VI's son and successor was Śīlāditya VII, also known as Dhruvabhata, whose inscription,[50] dated A.D. 766 was issued from Ānandapura. It proves that he was in possession of Kaira, but Lāṭa was conquered by the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

Śīlāditya VII is the last known king of the dynasty. In the middle of the eighth century A.D. a Saindhava dynasty is found ruling in the neighbourhood of 'Nawanagar State', Kāthiāwār.[51]

V. GURJARAS OF NĀNDĪPURĪ

Reference has been made (p. 261) to king Dadda II who was powerful enough to give protection to the Maitraka king Dhruvasena II against the emperor Harsha-vardhana. This king, *Parama-Māheśvara* Dadda II Praśāntarāga, was succeeded by his son Jayabhaṭa II, whose son and successor was the *Parama-māheśvara* Dadda III. Dadda III assumed the title *Bāhusahāya*.[52] He was succeeded by his son *Parama-māheśvara Mahāsāmantādhipati* Jayabhaṭa III, two of whose inscriptions, dated respectively A.D. 705 and 709, have been discovered.

Jayabhaṭa III was succeeded by the *Parama-māheśvara Mahāsāmantādhipati* Ahirola and the latter by the *Mahāsāmantādhipati* Jayabhaṭa IV. Two inscriptions[53] of Jayabhaṭa IV's reign, both dated in A.D. 736, refer to his conflict with the Arabs of Sindh. He is said to have 'forcibly extinguished the fire (in the State) of Tājjika, who had caused plenty of suffering to numerous people, in the city of the Lord of Valabhī, with the water of the edge of his sword.'[54] We may conclude from this that Jayabhata IV repulsed an attack of the Tājjikas, i.e., the Arabs, when the latter attacked the city of Valabhī. This Lord of Valabhī, as has already been suggested,

49 *IA*, VI, p. 17.
50 *IA*, VII, p. 79; *CII*, III, p. 173.
51 *Cf.* Ch. XXIV.
52 *IA*, XIII, p. 79.
53 *EI*, XXIII, p. 147; XXIV, p. 176; *IA*, V, p. 114.
54 *EI*, XXIII, p. 151, *n.* 7; cf. *IA*, V. p. 176; *IA*, V, p. 114.

was the Maitraka Śīlāditya V. The Nausari Plate, dated A.D. 739, mentioned earlier, seems to be referring to this incident. But the invasion of Valabhī by the Arabs is not known from the Muslim sources Al Balādhuri reports that Junaid, an officer under the Caliph Hisham (A.D. 724-43), sent his lieutenants to Marmad, Mandal, Dahnaj, and Barus (Broach) for conquest (*supra*, p. 572). Al Balādhuri, however, does not mention anything about the result of these invasions. It is not unlikely that the Arabs invaded both Bharukachchha and Valabhī about the same time, and suffered defeats at the hands of Jayabhaṭa IV.

Jayabhaṭa IV is the last known king of the dynasty. After his death a branch of the Chāhamāna dynasty is found in possession of the kingdom of Broach.

I. MINOR DYNASTIES IN RĀJASTHĀN

Rājasthān is the collective and classical name of that part of India which was known to the people either as "Rājwārā" or "Rāethán", but was corrupted to "Rajputanā by the British. It is popularly, though wrongly, assumed that the name "Rājasthān" was coined by Tod. Its use before him is, however, proved by the *Arzī Bahīs* of Jodhpur, now deposited in the Rājasthān Archives, Bikaner, though its connotation was perhaps slightly different.

A large number of States flourished in this region, the ruling families of which came to be known as Rājputs in the thirteenth century A.D. or later, and their history will be treated in Chapters XXII, XXIV and XXV. Others are briefly referred to in this section.

1. *Kingdom of Kachchhella*

In A.D. 641 Hiuan Tsang visited Ku-che-lo, which was 1800 *li* (300 miles) north of Surāshṭra, and 5000 *li* in circuit. Its capital was P'i-lo-mo-lo, and the reigning king was a Kshatriya. Watters restores P'i-lo-mo-lo as Bhilmal (Bhillamāla, mod. Bhinmal, in Jodhpur), but Saint-Martin identifies it with Barmer, also in Jodhpur. It appears from Brahmagupta's work, *Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta*, that the king Vyāghramukha of the Chāpa dynasty was ruling in Bhillamāla in A.D. 628.[55] Hiuan Tsang's Ku-che-lo is probably identical with Kachchhella of the Nausari plates of Avanijanāśraya-Pulakeśirāja,[56] though it is usually restored as Gurjara (country).

55 *IA*, XVII, p. 192.
56 See chapter XVI.

2. *Kingdom of Sirohi*

In the first half of the seventh century A.D. a king named Varmalāta ruled in the old Sirohi State, Rājputāna. Varmalāta's feudatory was the king (*nripati*) Rajjila, son of Vajrabhaṭa-Satyāśraya. Rajjila was administering Vaṭa or Vaṭakarasthāna, modern Vasantgadh, five miles south of Pindwara, Sirohi. During the reign of this chief a temple of Kshemāryā (Durgā) was built by a *goshṭīn* (an association) at Vaṭakarasthāna, in (V.S.) 682, A.D. 625. The temple of Kshemāryā is identical with that of Khimel *mātā* in Vasantgaḍh, where the referred stone inscription was discovered.

In the *Śiśupāla-vadha* of Māgha the poet's grandfather Suprabhadeva is mentioned as a minister to the king Varmalāta. Kielhorn identifies him with the king of this name mentioned in the Vasantgaḍh inscription.[57]

3. *The Mauryas*

A dynasty, bearing the honoured name, Maurya, ruled in the old Kotah State, Rājputāna in the first half of the eighth century. An inscription,[58] engraved into a wall of a temple of Mahādeva at Kanaswa, a few miles to the east of the town of Kotah, records that there was a king (*nripati*) Dhavala of the Maurya race. He had a friend Śaṅkuka, whose son was the king (*nripati*) Śivagaṇa. Śivagaṇa built a temple of Śiva at Kaṇvāśrama (mod. Kanaswa) and donated for its maintenance two villages, Sarvāṅka and Choṇipadraka in A.D. 738. Choṇipadraka is identified with Chaoni, near the town of Kotah. The king Dhavala of this inscription has been identified by some with the king Dhavalappa of the Dhoḍ (in Mewar) inscription who probably suffered a defeat at the hands of the Arabs. According to some he was deprived of his possession of Chitor by the Guhila Kālabhoja Bappa.[59]

The existence of another Maurya family has been recently brought to light by a fragmentary inscription at Mathura. Four members of this family, namely Krishnarāja, Chandragupta, Āryarāja and Diṇḍirāja, appear to have ruled over a part of Rājasthān and Mathura in regular succession.[60]

57 *EI*, IX, p. 190.
58 *IA*, XIX, p. 57.
59 Cf. Ch. XXV, Sections 3-4.
60 D. C. Sircar's Presidential Address, History and Archaealogy Section, All India Oriental Conference, Delhi, 1957 (This and the next para are added by the Editor.); another inscription coming from the same place is assigned to the Vikrama year 1012 (Bhandarkar's *List*, no. 1849).

Tod referred to an inscription on the bank of the Manasarobar tank near Chitor recording the names of the Maurya (Mori) princes Maheśvara, Bhīma, Bhoja and Māna. The tank was excavated during the reign of the last mentioned ruler in the Mālava year 770. But as there is no trace of the inscription, the reading of the date must be regarded as very doubtful.

4. *Śūrasena Dynasty of Bharatpur*

A Śūrasena-*vaṁśa* (dynasty), founded by Phakka, ruled in the 'Bharatpur State' in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. A fragmentary inscription[61] on a pillar in the village Kāmān or Kāmavana (Kammaga of Jain texts), in Bharatpur, forty miles west from Mathurā, mentions king Vatsadāman and his six ancestors. On palaeographic grounds the inscription may be placed in the eighth century A.D.

5. *Jhalrapatan*

In the latter part of the seventh century a king named Durgagaṇa ruled in Jhalrapatan. Two stone inscriptions[62] of this king's reign have been found in Jhalrapatan. One of them states that Voppaka, younger brother of Deva, was 'a bank-holder during the gaming parties of rich kings'. He built a temple of Śiva in *saṁvat* 746. Bhaṭṭa Sarvagupta composed this laudatory inscription. Bühler suggests that the above date may be referred to Vikrama, Śaka, or Gupta *saṁvat*, but Dr. Bhandarkar thinks that the date is in Vikrama era, which corresponds to A.D. 689.[63] The other inscription is badly mutilated.[64]

61 *IA*, X, p. 34. The family is also referred to in Bayana inscription (*EI*, XXII, p. 120).

62 *IA*, V, p. 180.

63 Bh. *List*, no. 14.

64 Cf. Bayana ins. of Chitralekha, v.s. 1012, *EI*, XXII, p. 120.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE GURJARA-PRATIHĀRAS

1. THE ORIGIN

REFERENCE HAS BEEN made earlier (p. 236) to the petty principalities in Rājasthān and Gujarat ruled over by the Gurjaras. But the dynasty which was destined to raise the Gurjara power to the height of its glory flourished some time later, and probably in Malwa. This dynasty, like that of Harichandra in Rājasthān (p. 238), called itself Pratihāra, but the use of the expression Gurjara-Pratihāra in an epigraphic record (no. 11) has led scholars to assume that these Pratihāras were a clan of the Gurjara tribe. This is, however, denied by some scholars, and it is necessary to discuss this question at some length before proceeding with the history of the Pratihāras.[1] The word *Gurjara*[2] frequently occurs in the epigraphic records of the period covered by this volume. Some scholars hold that it is the name of a foreign tribe that came to India along with the Hūṇas. But others deny this and maintain that *Gurjara* was primarily the name of a country, though it also denoted the people inhabiting it. This question has been discussed at length elsewhere[2a] and need not be dealt with here. In the opinion of the present writer *Gurjara* was originally the name of a tribe and was later used, with slight additions or variations, as a geographical name for the various settlements of the tribe such as Gujranwala, Gujrat, and Gujarkhan in the Punjab; Gujarāt in Saharanpur; Gujargarh in Gwalior; Gurjaratrā in Rājasthan and, lastly, the modern state of Gujarat. These settlements may be taken as

1 This question has been discussed in detail by the present writer in an article published in the *K. M. Munshi Commemoration Volume*. Among the large number of writers on this subject may be mentioned:

(1) K. M. Munshi. *The Glory that was Gurjaradeśa*

(2) Dr. D. C. Ganguly (*IHQ*. X, pp. 337, 613; XI, p. 167; *JBORS*, XXIV, p. 221, *PIHC*. III, p. 513). His views are also summarised in Ch. XXV of this volume.

(3) Dasaratha Sarma (*IC*. *IV*, p. 113; *Poona Orientalist*. II, p. 49. *IHQ*, XIII; p. 137; *ABORI*, XVIII. p. 396).

Some other articles (*IC*. I. p. 510; XI, p. 161; *IHQ*, VI, p. 753; *IA*, LVII, p. 181) may also be consulted.

2 The name is spelt both as *Gurjara* and *Gūrjara*

2a Cf. Chs IX. XXI, XXIV.

roughly indicating the gradual progress of the tribe from the western borders of the Panjab to the east and south, and as such lend support to the view that the Gurjaras came from outside India. But this is by no means certain, and we have an analogous case in the Mālavas for whom no foreign origin has been suggested by any scholar. Thus while we may be tolerably certain that the name *Gurjara* originally denoted an ethnic unit, the theory of its original home outside India may justly be challenged and the question must be left open.

But even if we regard *Gurjara* as the name of a tribe, it does not necessarily follow that the Pratihāras were a branch or clan of the Gurjara tribe. This view is based on the expression *Gurjara-Pratihāra* applied to Mathanadeva in the Rajor inscription (no. 11), but this phrase is explained differently by other scholars. Thus D. C. Ganguly takes it to mean 'the Pratihāra family of the Gurjara country' and further argues: 'Even if the term *Gurjara,* in this connection, is taken to have referred to the tribe, the Gurjara origin of the Pratihāras cannot be definitely proved. It can well be taken to mean that Mathanadeva's father belonged to the Gurjara tribe, and his mother was a member of the Pratihāra family'. Thus he holds that the Pratihāras and the Gurjaras were two distinct peoples. But apart from the far-fetched character of this interpretation, the Gurjara origin of the Pratihāras seems to be indubitably proved by references in contemporary epigraphic records. Thus we learn from the Karhad and Deoli plates that 'on hearing of Krishṇa (III)'s conquest of all the strongholds... the hope about Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa vanished from the heart of the Gurjara.'[3] Here the Gurjara can only refer to the Imperial Pratihāras, for no other political power in that age could have any claim on these fortresses. As we shall see later, the Gurjareśvara, who is said in the Baroda plates to have defeated the lords of Gauḍa and Vaṅga, can only refer to Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II, and the Gurjararāja Mahīpāla, referred to in the *Pampabhārata,* was certainly the Pratihāra king of that name. D. C. Ganguly has attempted to show, but without success, that the references to Gurjara, Gurjara king, etc. in contemporary records do not apply to the Pratihāras but to the Guhilas, and that even if applied to the Pratihāras, they are so called as they conquered the Gurjaras or the Gurjara country and not because they were themselves Gurjaras. These and similar attempts to explain away the obvious interpretation of the phrases Gurjareśvara, Gurjara-rāja, etc., cannot be regarded as of much weight, and there seems to be little doubt that the Pratihāras were regarded as Gurjaras.

3 *EI,* IV, p. 278; V, p. 188.

The word *Pratihāra*[4] means a door-keeper, and both the Jodhpur Pratihāras, referred to earlier (p. 238), and the Imperial Pratihāras; dealt with in this chapter, had a common tradition to the effect that they were so called because their ancestor, the epic hero Lakshmaṇa, served as a door-keeper to his brother Rāma on a famous occasion.[5] This proves a belief in the common origin of the Kshatriya and Brahmaṇa Pratihāras of Jodhpur and the Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauj, and goes against the assumption that there were no less than five distinct Pratīhāra clans who derived their title from the occupation of their ancestors as door-keepers. These five clans are made up of the three just mentioned, together with the Gurjara-Pratihāras of Rajor inscription, and the Baroda Pratihāras of Idar whose existence is very doubtful.[6] As we have seen above, three of these Pratihāras had the tradition of a common origin, and as they were also Gurjaras, their kinship with the Gurjara-Pratihāras of Rajor inscription may be easily presumed. There is thus no need to explain the origin of the Pratihāras as so many functional groups belonging to different castes and clans, as Ojha and other scholars have done. We should rather regard *Pratihāra* as the name of a Gurjara clan which believed in a common descent and settled in course of time in various parts of Western India.

II. EARLY HISTORY

The early history of the Pratihāra dynasty founded by Harichandra has been already narrated (p. 238). It has been suggested in this connection that there were probably several Pratihāra kingdoms, founded by the four sons of Harichandra. Howsoever that may be, we can possibly trace the existence of several Pratihāra kingdoms outside Rājasthān. V. A. Smith has referred to traditions, current in different parts of Bundelkhand, to the effect that the Prihāras (undoubtedly a variant or the later form of Pratihāras) settled in this region about the eighth century A.D.[7] As noted earlier (p. 238) the Pratihāras established a kingdom in Lāṭa or Southern Gujarāt and probably proceeded even further south, for A. Venkatasubbiah has traced the existence of Pratihāra chiefs even in the Kanara country.[8] But the most important Pratihāra ruling family was that founded by Nāgabhaṭa in the first half of the eighth century A.D. It eclipsed the

4. The name is spelt both as *Pratihāra* and *Pratīhāra.*
5 Cf. Inscriptions no. 1 (v. 3) and no. 2 (v. 4).
6 *Poona Orientalist*, II, p. 49.
7 *JASB*, 1881, Part I, pp 3 ff
8 *IA*, 1919, p. 132.

power and glory of the other Pratihāra families and raised the name and fame of the clan to a height of greatness such as North India had never witnessed since the days of the Imperial Guptas.

The early history of this family is preserved in the Gwalior inscription (no. 1) of Bhoja, the seventh king. It begins by a reference to the epic hero Lakshmaṇa, who acted as a door-keeper (*pratihāra*) to his elder brother Rāma on a memorable occasion, and then mentions Nāgabhaṭa as born in his line. We are told that this Nāgabhaṭa defeated the powerful forces of a Mlechchha king. As no other specific incident is mentioned of the first four kings, it was presumably looked upon as an event of great importance in the history of the family. As we shall see later, external evidences enable us to place the reign of Nāgabhaṭa about A.D. 725 and to locate his kingdom, in all probability, in Avanti or Malwa. Now we know from several lines of evidence that about this time the Arabs, having proceeded from the newly conquered territory in Sindh, advanced into the interior of India and conquered several kingdoms in what is now called Rājasthān. We learn from the Nausari plates that the Arabs triumphed over the Saindhavas, the Kachchhellas, the Chāvoṭakas, the Mauryas, the Gurjaras and the kingdom of Saurāshṭra, but their progress further south was checked by the defeat they suffered at the hands of Avanijanāśraya Pulakeśirāja, the Chālukya ruler of Gujarat.[9] The Arab chronicler Balādhuri also gives an account of the victorious expedition of the Arabs in the course of which they advanced as far as Broach in the south and Ujjayinī in the east. It is, however, significant that according to Balādhuri the Arabs only 'made incursions against Uzain.' If we remember that this expression is used by an Arab historian who refers to conquests of other kingdoms by the Arabs, we may easily infer that the Arabs could not achieve any success in their expedition against Ujjayinī, the capital of Avanti. But Balādhuri is even more explicit about the discomfiture of the Arabs that followed shortly later in this region. For he tells us that while Junaid, the general of Caliph Hasham (A.D. 724-43), made extensive conquests and sent officers against Uzain and the country of Maliba (i.e., Malwa), Tamim, who succeeded Junaid (about A.D. 726), was feeble, and in his days the Musulmans retired from several parts of India and left some of their possessions. If we consider, against this background, the great achievement of Nāgabhaṭa mentioned in the

9 *Transactions of the Vienna Oriental Congress*, VII, Aryan Section, p. 231; *B. G.*, I, Pt i, 109. The inscription of Pulakesiraja is dated A.D. 738 and he came to the throne in A.D. 731. The conflict with the Arabs therefore took place during the interval between these two years.

Gwalior inscription, *viz.*, that he defeated the powerful forces of a Mlechchha king, there can be little doubt about its real significance. It would appear that shortly after A.D. 724 the Arabs, from their secure base in Sindh, sent one or more expeditions against the interior of India and overwhelmed a number of kingdoms. But they were defeated by Nāgabhaṭa, the Pratihāra ruler of Avanti, and, probably some time later, by the Chālukya king of Gujarat. Nāgabhaṭa, who thus justified the family-name *Pratihāra* by defending the inner gate of India, must have achieved a unique position in Indian politics by his great victory over the Arabs, the conquerors of the world. While kingdoms in Western India, including the Gurjara principalities of Jodhpur and Broach, tumbled down, one after another, before the ruthless foreigners, he alone stood firm as a rock and stemmed the tide of conquest which threatened to deluge the whole country. We can well believe that the political prestige of this saviour of India rose very high, and that he laid the foundations of an empire on the ruin and devastations caused in Western India by the Arab invaders.

A copper-plate grant,[10] issued by the Chāhamāna ruler Bhartrivaddha from Broach in A.D. 756, mentions Nāgāvaloka as his suzerain. This Nāgāvaloka is generally identified with Nāgabhaṭa I.[11] If we accept this identification we must presume that Nāgabhaṭa I established his suzerainty over southern Lāṭa, which had been ruled by a Gurjara family at least up to A.D. 736.[12] Whether this Gurjara family was ousted by Nāgabhaṭa I, or perished at the hands of Arabs or due to other causes, we cannot say. But certain it is that a feudatory Chāhamāna family was now ruling over Broach, and that it probably acknowledged the suzerainty of Nāgabhaṭa I. The grant from Broach records the gift of a village in Akrūreśvara-*vishaya* which has been identified with Anklesvar *tāluk* on the left bank of the Narmadā. The feudatory Chāhamāna principality may thus be regarded as extending up to the Kim river in the south, and probably corresponded to the old Gurjara kingdom of Nāndīpuri or Broach.

This southward extension of the Pratihāra power brought it into conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭas, whose history has been narrated in Ch. XVI. We learn from a record of this dynasty that its founder king Dantidurga conquered Avanti and performed the *hiraṇyagarbha-dāna* ceremony in which a Gurjara king, along with other rulers, was made to serve as *Pratihāra* or door-keeper. It has been very reasonably suggested by D. R. Bhandarkar that the word *Pratihāra* is a

10 *EI*, XII, p. 197.
11 *IA*, 1911, p. 240; *EI* IX, p. 62; XII, p. 200.
12 Cf. Ch XXI.

covert allusion to the name of the clan to which the Gurjara king belonged, and that the passage in the Rāshṭrakūṭa record thus confirms the inference, based on other evidences, that a Gurjarā-Pratihāra family ruled in Avanti.[13] Although this view cannot be regarded as conclusive and has been challenged by others,[14] there can be hardly any doubt that Dantidurga defeated a Gurjara king who ruled in a neighbouring region. The victory of Dantidurga and the performance of the *hiraṇyagarbha* probably took place within a few years of A.D. 750 and certainly some time before A.D. 758 when Dantidurga was already dead. We may therefore hold that the Gurjara-Pratihāra king who suffered defeat at the hands of Dantidurga was most probably Nāgabhaṭa I.

Dantidurga claims to have conquered Lāṭa (southern Gujarāt) and Sindh.[15] But if we have rightly assumed that Nāgabhaṭa was invoked as the suzerain by the feudatory chief of Broach in A.D. 756, it does not appear that the victory claimed by the Rāshṭrakūṭa ruler Dantidurga was either decisive or permanent. It has been urged, on the strength of the Antroli-Chharoli grant, made in A.D. 757 by a feudatory Rāshṭrakūṭa chief of Gujarat, that Dantidurga had finally wrested Lāṭa from the Pratihāras.[16] But the villages granted by this charter, all lay to the south of the Kim river, and it would be difficult to agree with Altekar that 'since the donee hailed from Jambusara in the Broach district' it was included in the dominions of the Rāshṭrakūṭa feudatory.[17] On the whole, there is nothing to indicate that Nāgabhaṭa I lost his supremacy over the feudatory principality of Broach which, as noted above, extended up to the Kim river in the south.

It is evident that both Nāgabhaṭa I and Dantidurga fished in troubled waters caused by the Arab raids, and no wonder they came

13 *EI*, XVIII, p. 239. Cf also *GP*. 24-4, *AR*. 40 (n. 32). The Ellora Daśāvatāra Cave Ins. (*ASWI*. V, p. 87), which mentions the performance of the Mahādāna ceremony by Dantidurga at Ujjayinī, further states, a little later, that he occupied, at this place (*asmin*), a palace of the Gurjara ruler. The pronoun *asmin* might refer to either Ujjayinī or Ellora, where the inscription was actually engraved, and this furnishes a corroborative evidence of the Gurjara rule in Avanti, if not further south. Curiously enough this point has been overlooked by scholars who reject Bhandarkar's view that the Gurjara-Pratihāras were at this time ruling in Avanti. Incidentally, the reference to a palace of the Gurjara ruler either in Ujjayinī or at Ellora shows that *Gurjara* was a tribal name, for none of the two places was situated in the Gurjara country.

14 *IHQ*, VI, p. 755, *ABORI*, XVIII, p. 396.

15 *AR*, pp. 38-9.

16 *JIH*, XXII, p. 94.

17 *AR*, p. 11.

into conflict. But though Dantidurga might have gained some victories at first, he could not achieve any lasting success either in Avanti or Broach. Perhaps the impending conflict with his Chālukya overlord forced him to abandon his aggressive designs in the north. Howsoever that may be, we may on the basis of available evidence, hold that Nāgabhaṭa's power could not be effectively curbed by the Rāshṭrakūṭa ruler. But it is interesting to note that the hostile relation between the founders of the Rāshṭrakūṭa and the Pratihāra royal families was but the beginning of that hereditary struggle between the two dynasties which continued for two centuries, and more than once effectively curbed the powers of the latter when it was almost on the point of setting itself up as an imperial power in Northern India.

It is very likely that Nāgabhaṭa established his supremacy over the Pratihāras of Jodhpur line, whose power must have been considerably weakened by the disastrous Arab invasion. An official record of this family (no. 2), which gives its whole history, refers to Śiluka as a great and powerful king, but states that 'his son Jhoṭa proceeded to the Bhāgīrathī and his grandson Bhillāditya, possessed of *satva* qualities and disposed to austerities, bestowed the kingdom on his son and proceeded to Gaṅgādvāra.' As Śiluka flourished in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D., there is hardly any doubt that the Pratihāra family of Jodhpur was reduced to political insignificance during the latter part of the eighth century A.D. As the successors of Nāgabhaṭa are known to have ruled in Eastern Rājasthān, we may easily presume that the Jodhpur family had to acknowledge the supremacy of either Nāgabhaṭa I or his immediate successors. In other words, the family of Nāgabhaṭa stepped into the position of headship of the Gurjara-Pratihāras, so long enjoyed by the Jodhpur chiefs.

Nāgabhaṭa I, the conqueror of the Arab invaders, thus stands out as a great national hero and empire-builder in the middle of the eighth century A.D. The Gwalior inscription of Bhoja (no. 1) describes him as the image of Nārāyaṇa. There is no doubt that he achieved an all-India reputation by defeating the Arabs and, when he died about A.D. 760, he was able to leave a powerful and extensive kingdom to his brother's son Kakkuka who succeeded him.

Practically nothing is known about Kakkuka beyond the fact that his original name was Kākustha (Kākutstha), and he came to be known as Kakkuka (i.e., one who always laughs) on account of his habit of saying welcome things in an inverted manner. He was succeeded by his younger brother Devarāja, who is described

in the Gwalior inscription (no.1) as a very powerful ruler, wielding sovereignty over a number of chiefs. But unfortunately we know no details of his reign

III. VATSARĀJA

Vatsarāja, the son and successor of Devarāja, is described in the Gwalior inscription (vv. 6-7) as a mighty ruler who had subdued the whole world and was the foremost among the distinguished Kshatriyas. We are fortunate in possessing a great deal of information about him from other sources.

First, we have a passage in the Jaina work *Kuvalayamālā* stating that it was composed in the Saka year 700 (A.D. 778) at Jāvālipura (modern Jalor) which was at that time ruled by the Raṇahastin (war-elephant) Vatsarāja.[18] This Vatsarāja has been generally identified with the Pratihāra ruler Vatsarāja. We thus get a sure date for his reign and can fix upon a definite locality over which he ruled. We get further information on both these points from a verse in another Jaina work, *Harivaṁśa-Purāṇa* by Jinasena, which reads as follows:[19]

Śākeshv-abda—śateshu saptasu diśaṁ pañchottaresh-ūttarāṁ
pāt-Indrāyudha—nāmni Krishṇa—nṛipaje Śrīvallabhe dakshiṇāṁ
pūrvāṁ śrīmad—Avanti-bhūbhṛiti nṛipe Vatsādirāje parām
Sauryāṇām-adhimaṇḍalam jaya—yute vīre Varāhe-vati

We learn from the first half of this verse (*i.e.*, ll. 1-2) that in the year 705 Śaka (A.D. 783-84), when Jinasena composed the work at a town called Vardhamānapura, there were reigning Indrāyudha in the north, and Śrīvallabha, son of Kṛishṇa, in the south. The second half of the passage mentions other kings in the other directions, but unfortunately the interpretation is a disputed one. According to Fleet and others, it refers to Vatsarāja, king of Avanti, as ruling in the east, and Varāha or Jayavarāha, in the territory of the Sauryas, in the west. This interpretation was challenged by D. R. Bhandarkar who held that the word *nṛipe* in line 3 shows that Vatsarāja was different from king of Avanti. He therefore proposed a new translation, viz., 'in the east, the illustrious king of Avanti, in the west king Vatsarāja, (and) in the territory of the Sauryas, the victorious and brave Varāha.' Subsequently, when editing the Sañjan copper-plate,

18 *ABORI*, XVIII, pp. 397-98.

19 The verse was originally noticed by K. B. Pathak (*IA*, XV, p. 141) and subsequently discussed by many scholars. For the different views about its interpretation cf. *GP*, pp. 23 ff.

he drew attention to verse 9 which refers to the *hiraṇyagarbha* ceremony of Dantidurga at Avanti already mentioned in p. 616. As he interpreted this verse to mean that the Gurjara-Pratihāras were ruling at Avanti in those days, he accepted the validity of Fleet's interpretation of the verse in *Harivaṁśa-Purāṇa*, according to which Vatsarāja was the king of Avanti.[20] But though Bhandarkar lately gave up his old view it is still upheld by other scholars[21] who further maintain that the verse 9 of the Sañjan plate does not prove the rule of the Gurjara-Pratihāras in Avanti. Some scholars also propose to locate Vardhamānapura, where the *Harivaṁśa-Purāṇa* was composed, not at Wadhwan in Kāthiāwār peninsula as has been generally supposed, but at Badnawar (in the Dhārā state), about 40 miles to the south-west of Ujjain.[22] It is neither possible nor necessary to mention here all the different viewpoints which have been discussed at length elsewhere by the present writer.[23] It will suffice to state that no adequate grounds have been shown to reject the original translation of Fleet which is still accepted by the majority of scholars as well as here.

The two Jaina works mentioned above enable us to fix, fairly definitely, the chronology of the Pratihāras of Avanti. As Vatsarāja, who is known to have ruled in A.D. 778 and 783, was the fourth king and third in descent from Nāgabhaṭa I, we may place the accession of the latter at about A.D. 725. If, as suggested above, he died about A.D. 760, the reign of Kakkuka and Devarāja may be placed between A.D. 760 and 775.

Further, the reference to Vatsarāja as king of Avanti, although his kingdom included Jalor in Rājasthān, shows that the nucleus of his kingdom was in Malwa and Nāgabhaṭa I began his career in this region. It is probable that his ancestors advanced eastwards from the common homeland of the Pratihāras in Jodhpur, as another branch moved to the south, and ultimately seized power in Malwa. It is a pity that we know so little about the predecessors or antecedents of Nāgabhaṭa I, but the foundation of a Pratihāra kingdom in Avanti may be easily explained on this basis.

The two Jaina works, mentioned above, prove that both Avanti and Jalor were included in Vatsarāja's kingdom. The Osia stone inscription[24] and the Daulatpura copper-plate[25] (no. 13) clearly show that he exercised sway in Gurjaratrā in Central Rājasthān. The only

20 *EI*, XVIII, p. 239.
21 *IHQ*, VI, p. 755; *ABORI*, XVIII, p. 396.
22 *IC*, XI, pp. 164-66.
23 *Munshi Commemoration Volume*.
24 *JRAS* 1907, p. 1010. Progress Report *ASWI*, 1906-7, pp. 15, 36.

fact of importance which we know about him from the Gwalior inscription (no. 1) is that he wrested the empire from the famous Bhaṇḍi clan. We do not know who the Bhaṇḍis were, and where their empire lay. It is not, however, unlikely, that Indrāyudha, his great contemporary in the north according to the verse from *Harivaṁśa-Purāṇa* quoted in p 619, represented this imperial power with his seat of authority at Kanauj, and that by defeating him Vatsarāja gained the political supremacy in this region. Howsoever that may be, there is no doubt that Vatsarāja followed an aggressive imperial policy which brought him into conflict with the Pāla rulers of Gauḍa He attained considerable success in his eastern enterprise but unfortunately the fruits of his victory were snatched away from him by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva (A.D. 779-94). The whole episode is described as follows in a verse which occurs both in Radhanpur and Wani grants of Govinda III, the son of Dhruva:

'By his (i.e., Dhruva's) matchless armies having quickly driven into the trackless desert Vatsarāja, who boasted of having with ease appropriated the fortune of the royalty of the Gauḍa, he in a moment took away from him, not merely the Gauḍa's two umbrellas of state, white like the rays of the autumn moon, but his own fame also that had spread to the confines of the regions.'[26]

Bereft of poetic embellishments this verse refers, first, to the unique position of supremacy which Vatsarāja had attained by defeating the king of Gauḍa, and secondly, to the crushing defeat inflicted upon him while he was at the height of his success, by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva.

As regards the first, it is not definitely known whether Vatsarāja actually advanced as far as Bengal and overran a large part of it. For all we know the fight between him and the Pāla ruler might have taken place far away from the borders of Bengal, as in the case of the encounter between Dhruva and the Pāla king. According to a verse in *Prithvīrājavijaya* the sword of the Chāhamāna king Durlabharāja purified itself by a dip at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the sea and by the taste of the land of Gauḍa. It has been argued that Durlabharāja, whose son is known to have been a feudatory of Nāgabhata, was himself a feudatory of Vatsarāja, and accompanied

25 *EI*, V, p. 208. (The date is 900 V.S. not year 100 of the Harsha era as stated herein.)

26 *EI*, VI, p. 248.

him in his expedition to Bengal.[27] This may be readily accepted, but the story of his advance, across the whole length of Bengal, up to the mouth of the Ganges, recorded in stray verses composed about four centuries later, should not be accepted as historical without corroborative evidence.[28]

But whatever view we might take, there is no denying the fact that Vatsarāja succeeded in establishing a position of almost unchallenged supremacy in North India when he was attacked by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva. No specific grounds for this hostility are known to us, and it may be that Dhruva simply revived the old aggressive policy of Dantidurga against the Pratihāras, whose growing power made them a formidable neighbour and a dreaded rival. But whatever may be the cause there is no doubt about the result of the conflict. Vatsarāja suffered a serious reverse at the hands of his Rāshṭrakūṭa adversary His imperial ambitions were shattered and, what is worse, he probably lost his hold over Malwa. He was forced to take shelter in Rājasthān which henceforth formed the centre of his political authority and the chief seat of the power of the Pratihāra family, until some time later, it was transferred to Kanauj.

The tragic end of Vatsarāja should not make us forget, or minimise in any way, the credit that undoubtedly belongs to him for having laid the foundations of that empire which shone in the full blaze of its glory in the reign of his great-grandson Bhoja. For the imperial dream was not only kept alive, but even realised to a large extent by Nāgabhaṭa II, the son and successor of Vatsarāja.

IV. NĀGABHAṬA II

Nāgabhaṭa II, whose only known date is A.D. 815, probably succeeded his father before 800. As will be noted in the next chapter, the Pāla king Dharmapāla had taken advantage of the reverses of Vatsarāja to build up a mighty empire in North India, and installed his own nominee Chakrāyudha on the throne of Kanauj. But Nāgabhaṭa set himself to the task of retrieving the fortunes of his family. The Gwalior inscription (no. 1) describes his achievements in four verses and some light is thrown on his activities by the Rāshṭrakūṭa records.

It appears that Nāgabhaṭa II first made an alliance with several other states, particularly the Saindhava, Andhra, Vidarbha, and Kaliṅga. It is said in the Gwalior record that the rulers of these states succumbed to the power of Nāgabhaṭa as moths do unto fire.

27 *IHQ*. *XIV*. p. 844; *JIH*, XXII, p. 99.
28 *HB*, I, p. 105.

The use of this simile led the present writer to suggest long ago, that the rulers of these four kingdoms were not conquered by Nāgabhaṭa but joined him of their own accord in the first instance, though as usually happens, they became feudatories or subordinate allies of the Pratihāra emperor. This view has been accepted by some[29] and rejected by others.[30] But the political and geographical situation of these states seems to lend strength to this view. The Saindhavas ruled in the western part of the Kāthiāwār peninsula. The neighbouring province of Lāta, as noted in (pp. 616-17), was a bone of contention between the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Pratihāras. The Andhra region was ruled over by the Eastern Chālukyas who were sworn enemies of the Rāshṭrakūṭas and carried on hereditary feuds with them. The Eastern Chālukya king Vijayāditya II, whose rule covered the first half of the eighth century A.D., overran the Rāshṭrakūṭa dominions[31], and it is not unlikely that he made common cause with Nāgabhaṭa against the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Kaliṅga and Vidarbha were immediate neighbours of the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas and often felt the brunt of their attacks. It is therefore quite natural that they, too, would form a confederacy with Nāgabhaṭa against their common enemies, the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

But howsoever that may be, Nāgabhaṭa made extensive preparations and fought against both his powerful rivals, *viz.*, the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The chronological sequence of his campaigns cannot be ascertained, and we can only refer to them as isolated incidents. He turned his attention towards Kanauj and defeated its ruler Chakrāyudha who was a protegé of Dharmapāla. It was a bold bid to recover the position of political supremacy which his father had lost, and naturally involved a trial of strength with the Pāla emperor Dharmapāla of Bengal. The conflict between the two was not long in coming. The Gwalior inscription describes how the powerful array of elephants and horses of the lord of Vaṅga was destroyed by Nāgabhaṭa. The lord of Vaṅga undoubtedly refers to Dharmapāla, and the battle probably took place at Monghyr. For the Jodhpur inscription (no. 2) of Bāuka, the ruler of the Jodhpur branch of the Pratihāras, informs us that his father Kakka 'gained renown by fighting with the Gauda at Mudgagiri (Monghyr).' As Bāuka's inscription is dated A.D 837, his father Kakka must have been a contemporary of Nāgabhaṭa II. Kakka was too insignificant a chief

29 *THK*, pp. 234-35.

30 *JIH*, XXII, pp. 102-3.

31 D. C. Ganguly, *Eastern Chalukyas*, p. 49.

to carry on war on his own account to a distant place like Monghyr. It is probable therefore that he joined the expedition of Nāgabhaṭa against Dharmapāla. Vāhukadhavala, the great-grandfather of a feudatory chief (of Surāshtra) of Nāgabhaṭa's great-grandson, is said to have defeated king Dharma[32] ,while Śaṅkaragaṇa, the Guhilot prince, is said to have defeated the king of Gauḍa, and made a present of this kingdom to his overlord.[33] It is probable that these two feudal chiefs also helped their overlord Nāgabhaṭa II in his campaign against Dharmapāla.

The next verse in the Gwalior inscription informs us that Nāgabhaṭa captured the strongholds of Ānartta, Mālava, Kirāta, Turushka, Vatsa and Matsya countries. The conquest of the last two may be regarded as almost a direct consequence of his victory over Dharmapāla. For Matsya is specifically mentioned as a vassal state of Dharmapāla and Vatsa, too, must have belonged to the same category. Kirāta is the name of a primitive tribe, but may be taken as corresponding to the kingdom of the Kīras, another vassal state of Dharmapāla.[33a] Thus, one by one the outlying vassal states of the Pāla empire were made to recognize the supremacy of Nāgabhaṭa.

More interest attaches to the fact that Nāgabhaṭa fought with and defeated the Turushkas. According to the *Prabandhakośa*, a late composition, the Chāhamāna Govindarāja I, also known as Guvāka I, repulsed an attack of Sultan Veg Varisha. Now this Guvāka, son of Durlabharāja mentioned in (p. 622), is said to have attained pre-eminence in the court of Nāgāvaloka who has been identified with Nāgabhaṭa II. We may therefore readily accept that Guvāka was a feudatory chief of Nāgabhaṭa II. We know from *Khummāṇa Raso* that the Guhila chief Khummāṇa II, joined with other Indian chiefs, defeated in Arab attack during the Caliphate of Al-Mamun (A.D. 817-33). Sultan Veg Varisha, defeated by Guvāka, may be identified with Bashar, son of Dāūd, who was the governor of Sindh under the Caliph Al-Mamun. We may therefore conclude that Nāgabhaṭa II, aided by Guvāka I, Khommāna II, and probably other Indian chiefs, defeated Bashar and captured some of his strongholds.[34] It may be incidentally mentioned here that there was also a Mlechchha settlement about this time on the bank of the Chambal river. For Chaṇḍamahāsena, the Chāhamāna chief of Dholpur

32 *EI*, IX, p. 2.

33 Chatsu ins. (*EI*, XV, p. 10), v. 4.

33a The Sravaṇa Belgola Ins. (*EI*, V, p. 179) refers to the Kirātas dwelling in the forests of the Vindhyas.

34 *History and Culture of the Indian People*, IV, Ch. V.

branch, claims in his inscription dated A.D. 842[35] to have been obeyed by the Mlechchha rulers on the Charmaṇvatī. These Mlechchha rulers cannot be identified, but the term usually refers to non-Hindu outsiders, and may refer to some Muslim settlements. But although their location would be more suitable for the purpose of Nāgabhaṭa's invasion, we cannot be sure of their Turkish origin.

Nāgabhaṭa's campaign against Ānartta and Mālava probably indicates a conflict with his other rival power, the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Ānartta denoted a part of Northern Gujarāt, not far from that portion of Lāṭa, which formed a part of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire. As regards Mālava, we have already noted above that it originally belonged to the Pratihāras, but at least a portion of it, including Avanti, was conquered by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dantidurga. Later Vatsarāja, the father of Nāgabhaṭa, was ruling at Avanti, and probably also over a large part, if not the whole, of Mālava. The fact that Nāgabhaṭa had to conquer Mālava necessarily shows that the Pratihāras had lost it, evidently after the disastrous defeat that Vatsarāja had sustained at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva.

The Gwalior inscription refers to Nāgabhaṭa's capturing the strongholds of Ānartta and Mālava without saying anything about his conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. But though the Pratihāra court-poet leaves his hero in the full blaze of his glory, we have indubitable evidence to prove that these hereditary enemies made the sun of Pratihāra glory set even in the lifetime of Nāgabhaṭa II.

It has been described above (pp. 452-53) how the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Govinda III, who succeeded Dhruva, had been busy suppressing internal troubles within his kingdom from almost the very beginning of his reign. He could not, therefore, devote much attention to the affairs of the North, which were left to the care of his brother Indrarāja whom he appointed governor of Lāṭeśvara-maṇḍala which probably included, besides Lāṭa, the whole of the northern possessions of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Presumably, Nāgabhaṭa took advantage of the preoccupations of Govinda III in the South to reconquer some of the territories Vatsarāja had lost, such as Mālava. This naturally brought him into conflict with Indrarāja. A passage in the Baroda plates refers to this fight as follows: 'By him (i.e., Indrarāja) alone, the leader of the lords of the Gurjaras, who prepared himself to give battle bravely lifting up his neck, was quickly caused, as if he were a deer, to take to the (distant) regions.'[36] The leader of the Gurjara

35 Bh. *List*, no. 27.

36 *IA*, XII, p. 163.

lords undoubtedly refers to Nāgabhaṭa, but the result of the battle was not perhaps so decisive as the Rāshṭrakūṭa records would indicate. For Vāhukadhavala, the same feudal chief of Nāgabhaṭa who fought against Dharmapāla, is said to have defeated a Karṇāṭa army, which evidently can only refer to the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Here, again, we must presume that Vāhukadhavala fought along with, or at least on behalf of, his suzerain Nāgabhaṭa II. Thus the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Pratihāras both claim victory against each other, and we can only conclude that the result was indecisive. The northern frontier of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire was, however, effectively guarded against the Pratihāras, first by Indrarāja and then by his son Karkarāja whose Baroda plates tell us that the Rāshṭrakūṭa emperor had 'caused his arm to become an excellent door-bar of the country of the lord of Gurjaras'.

But Nāgabhaṭa was too powerful an enemy to be left long to be dealt with by the governor of Lāṭa alone. So Govinda III, evidently after settling affairs in the South, determined to give up the merely defensive policy hitherto pursued. He took the offensive and personally led an expedition on a large scale against Nāgabhaṭa. Several Rāshṭrakūṭa records refer to the phenomenal success of Govinda III. We are told in the contemporary records that the Gurjara king 'in fear vanished nobody knew whither, so that even in a dream he might not see battle.'[37] The Sañjan plates, belonging to the reign of Govinda III's son, add that Govinda III 'carried away in battles the fair and unshakable fame of kings and Nāgabhaṭa and Chandragupta... uprooted other kings... and afterwards re-instated them,' and then proceeded up to the Himālayas. The same plates further inform us that Dharma (i.e., Dharmapāla) and Chakrāyudha 'surrendered to him of themselves'.[38]

Even making due allowance for poetic exaggerations and partisan spirit, we may legitimately conclude from the Rāshṭrakūṭa records that Govinda III's military campaigns in the North were attended with brilliant success. The serious reverses sustained by Nāgabhaṭa II did not altogether destroy his power, but effectively checked his aggressive designs and gave a further lease of life to the Pāla empire under Dharmapāla and his son Devapāla.

The statement that Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha submitted, of

37 *EI*, VI, p. 250.

38 Sañjan Plates (*EI*, XVIII, p 245), vv. 22-23. King Chandragupta mentioned in the record was a king of the Kosala country ruling at Srīpura or Sirpur (*ibid*, p. 240).

their own accord, to Govinda III, is interesting in more ways than one. We may reasonably presume that Nāgabhaṭa's victory over them preceded the invasion of Govinda III. As such they had every reason to feel grateful to the Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch for the crushing defeat inflicted upon their powerful rival. It is no wonder, therefore, that they would voluntarily, i.e., without any fight, wait upon and pay respect to Govinda III for the great deliverance. Indeed, the circumstances were such that one might even suspect that it was at their express invitation that Govinda III had undertaken the expedition against Nāgabhaṭa II. This would at any rate satisfactorily explain the complete discomfiture of Nāgabhaṭa II and the triumphant march of the Rāshṭrakūṭa army right across his dominions up to the Himālayas.

As noted above, the sequence of the various events during the reign of Nāgabhaṭa II is not known to us. It is, therefore, possible to reconstruct his reign in different ways. It may be argued, for example, that his defeat at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭas took place early in his reign, and later he won the numerous victories recorded in the Gwalior inscription and left a mighty empire to his son. On the contrary, it may be held with equal cogency that he won brilliant victories and was on the point of consolidating his empire in North India, when Govinda III shattered his imperial plans, as Dhruva had done to his father. The latter view appears to be more likely, though one should not be dogmatic on this point.

In the opinion of the present writer the voluntary submission of Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha to Govinda III clearly indicates that Nāgabhaṭa's victories over them preceded the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion. It is more doubtful when the other victories of Nāgabhaṭa, mentioned above, were won. Probably some of them preceded and others followed his great victory against Dharmapāla. According to the Gwalior record his military successes began even in his boyhood. It is therefore more reasonable to assume that he first made his position strong by a number of successful campaigns before he felt powerful enough to challenge the Pāla empire. His success in this enterprise probably enabled him to score more victories and also seize some of the vassal states of the Pālas. Then, flushed with success, he probably sought to retrieve the lost possession in the south from the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and this involved him in that fateful struggle which ended so disastrously for him.

The date of the great victory of Govinda III over Nāgabhaṭa II cannot be determined with certainty, but it certainly took place

before the end of A.D. 805, the date of the Nesarika grant which refers in detail to his Northern campaigns.[39]

Nāgabhaṭa long survived his defeat at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and although his imperial ambitions were curbed, his power was not effectively destroyed. A record, dated A.D. 815, found at Buchkala[40] (Bilada district, Jodhpur) gives him all the imperial titles, but describes the locality as *sva-vishaya* or dominions proper. It would thus appear that he still retained, at least in theory, his imperial status, and the centre of his authority was fixed in Rajasthan. Perhaps it was so from the very beginning of his reign, or after his father Vatsarāja had lost Mālava. It was then from this centre that Nāgabhaṭa had extended his dominions and sphere of influence in all directions. We have already referred to the three feudatories who helped him against the Pālas. To this we may add another, Guvāka I, the founder of the Chāhamāna dynasty of Śākambharī (near Ajmer) who is referred to as his vassal in a later inscription (no. 6, v. 13). Whether these feudal chiefs continued to pay allegiance to Nāgabhaṭa II even after his defeat by Govinda III we cannot say. But that many of them did so is rendered probable by the fact to be noted later, that within a few years of Nāgabhaṭa's death his grandson Bhoja could enlist their support in his military expeditions. It may also be doubted whether Nāgabhaṭa II was able to retain all his conquests mentioned in the Gwalior inscription. Special interest attaches in this connection to his relation with the rulers of Andhra, Kaliṅga, Vidarbha, and the Saindhavas. As mentioned above, the expression used in the Gwalior inscription seems to indicate that though they were at first free and equal partners in a confederacy, they were ultimately reduced to the position of subordinate allies. A number of copper-plate grants[41] of the Saindhava chiefs seem to confirm this view in respect of them. For while these chiefs, for generations, remained loyal and devoted to the Pratihāras, they did not formally invoke the Pratihāra rulers as suzerains, as was done by the Chāpas and the Chālukyas of the Kathiawar peninsula—the two feudatories ruling immediately to their east. But while the political influence of Nāgabhaṭa over the Saindhavas survived his defeat and disgrace, the same cannot be said of the remaining three states. Whether, and if so when, they formed part of the Pratihāra empire, and ceased to be so, are alike unknown.

39 *EI*, XXXIV, pp. 123 ff.

40 *EI*, IX, p. 199.

41 *EI*, XXVI, p. 185.

Equally uncertain is Nāgabhaṭa's association with Kanauj. It has been held that, after defeating Chakrāyudha, Nāgabhaṭa transferred his headquarters to Kanauj which continued to be the capital of the Pratihāras ever since. This view is mainly based on a stray passage in a Jaina text *Prabhāvaka-charita*, according to which king Nāgāvaloka of Kānyakubja, the grandfather of Bhoja, died in 890 v.s. (A.D. 833).[42] The fact that Bhoja was in possession of, and probably had his capital at, Kanauj in A.D. 836 (no. 12) also lends some colour to this view. But as against this we should remember that the *Prabhāvaka-charita* was composed in the thirteenth century A.D. when Kanauj had long been popularly known as the famous capital of the Pratihāras, and so the Jaina chronicler might easily, though wrongly, associate an early ruler of the family with that famous city. Further, the reference in Buchkala inscription, mentioned above, to the Jodhpur region as the 'dominions proper' of Nāgabhaṭa II also seems to preclude the possibility of his transferring the capital to Kanauj before A.D. 815. Such a transfer after that date does not appear to be very likely in view of what we know of the history of the Pāla empire about this time. Nevertheless the transfer cannot be ruled out altogether as impossible. But whatever we might think of Kanauj, later records leave no doubt that in the east Nāgabhaṭa's dominions included both Gwalior and Kālañjara.

The passage in the *Prabhāvaka-charita* quoted above, places the death of Nāgabhaṭa II in A.D. 833 As his grandson is known to have been ruling in A.D. 836, the date, occurring in a very late chronicle, seems to be somewhat doubtful. If we provisionally accept it, as has generally been done, we have to presume that Rāmabhadra, the son and successor of Nāgabhaṭa II, did not rule for more than two years. But Rāmabhadra's reign was not only short but also inglorious. It would appear from two records during the reign of his son and successor Bhoja, that he had lost hold both over Gurjaratrā in Rājasthan, and Kālañjara-*maṇḍala*. The loss of the latter seems to be confirmed by an inscription found at Gwalior[43] in which one Vaillabhatta is referred to as chief of boundaries in the service of Rāmabhadra, indicating that Gwalior formed the frontier of the Pratihāras during this reign. The only verse referring to Rāmabhadra in the Gwalior inscription of Bhoja seems to imply that Rāmabhadra delivered his country from the yoke of foreign soldiers who were notorious for their cruel deeds. There can be hardly any

42 *EI*, XIV, p. 179 (*n.* 3).

43 *EI*, I, p. 154.

doubt that these foreigners were the Pālas, and the discomfiture and disgrace that befell the Pratihāra kingdom can be easily explained by the victories of Devapāla to which reference will be made in the next chapter.

Thus two independent lines of evidence seem to indicate that the power and prestige of the Pratihāras sank to a very low ebb indeed during the reign of Rāmabhadra, and it is very probable that the decline had set in even in the closing years of Nāgabhaṭa II. It is therefore more rational to regard the reign of Nāgabhaṭa II, like that of his father, as ending ingloriously, in spite of its brilliant promise at the beginning. Nevertheless their reigns constitute an important landmark in the history of the Pratihāra empire, and their daring enterprise and great military skill mark them out as leading figures in the political history of India during that age.

V. BHOJA I

Bhoja, the son and successor of Rāmabhadra, was undoubtedly the greatest king of this dynasty, and the most powerful ruler in India during the second half of the ninth century A.D. He ascended the throne at a time when the fortunes of his family were at the lowest ebb, but when he died more than half a century later, he left a vast consolidated empire which was without any rival in Northern India.

The earliest record of the king is a copper-plate found at Barah (no. 12). It was issued in v.s. 893 (A.D. 836) from his camp (*skandhāvāra*) at Mahodaya in order to confirm an endowment in the Kālañjara-*maṇḍala* (sub-division) of the *bhukti* (division) of Kānvakubja, which had lapsed (i.e., whose enjoyment was obstructed) during the reign of his father. This record is of more than passing interest. Besides proving that Bhoja had ascended the throne in or before A.D. 836, it shows that he was already, in that year, in possession of certain territories near about Kālañjara (Banda district, U.P.) which was presumably lost to the family during the reign of his father. Further, as Mahodaya is a well-known name of Kanauj, we may also hold that he had occupied and probably fixed his capital at Kanauj, even if it had not already been done by his ancestors. To this last conclusion however, more than one objection has been raised. It has been urged in the first place that Mahodaya in this record cannot be identified with Kānyakubja, as this name occurs side by side as the divisional headquarters. This is no doubt a very valid objection but can hardly be regarded as decisive, for it is just possible that while the older name was retained as a designation for the division, the alternative name was used to denote the capital city. It may be

noted in this connection that the Pāla records of this time also indiscriminately use both the forms *'Kānyakubja'* and *'Mahodaya.'* The other objection, that as Mahodaya is mentioned as a *skandhāvāra* (camp) it should not be regarded as the capital city, is less valid; for we know that even far-famed capital cities like Pāṭaliputra and Vikramapura have been systematically referred to as *skandhāvāra* in the Pāla and Sena records, and lexicons give both the meanings 'capital' and 'camp' for this word. We may thus legitimately conclude that even as early as A.D. 836 Bhoja had attained considerable success in the east; he had not only recovered the Kālañjara district, but also the region in the neighbourhood of Kanauj, which was probably his capital city.

That Bhoja was equally successful in re-asserting his authority over other parts of his kingdom is proved by the Daulatpura copper-plate (no. 13). It records that a piece of land in Gurjaratrā was originally granted by Vatsarāja, and the grant was continued by Nāgabhaṭa II; it, however, fell into abeyance, presumably during the next reign, and was renewed by Bhoja in A.D. 843. Here again, we find a situation, very similar to that recorded in the Barah copper-plate, and we may equally presume that Bhoja recovered the possession of Gurjaratrā which was lost during his father's reign. Fortunately, we have, in this case, independent evidence to corroborate the presumption.

As has been noted before, Gurjaratrā denoted, in those days, a wide region covering the central and eastern Rājasthan which formed the home-land of the Pratihāras, and was originally included, either in whole or in part, within the dominions of the Jodhpur branch. It has been already mentioned (p. 618) how this branch came to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pratihāras of Avanti, and how Kakka of this dynasty accompanied the expedition of Nāgabhaṭa II against Dharmapāla. It would appear, however, that Kakka assumed independence after the disastrous defeat suffered by Nāgabhaṭa at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. In an inscription (no. 2) dated A.D. 837 Kakka's queen-consort is called a *Mahārājñī* and the exploits of their son Bāuka are referred to in a way which leaves no doubt that he was an independent king. The Daulatpura copper-plate, however, shows that Bhoja regained possession of Gurjaratrā by the year A.D. 843.

We have thus clear evidence that within a few years of his accession Bhoja succeeded in restoring the fallen fortunes of his family to a considerable extent. Evidently he was loyally assisted by at

least some of the old feudatory chiefs. One of them, the Guhilot prince Harsharāja, son of Saṅkaragaṇa (p. 624), boasted of having conquered the kings in the north and presented horses to Bhoja (no. 4). This probably indicates that Bhoja undertook military campaigns in the north and extended the boundaries of his dominions, though, unfortunately, we possess no details.

But the initial success of Bhoja was of short duration. Soon he had to contend with his hereditary enemies, the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and fared badly. We have no direct evidence of his encounter with the contemporary Pāla emperor, Devapāla, but the detailed account of the latter's conquests, which will be discussed in the next chapter, hardly leaves any doubt that he played a dominant part in North Indian politics, and Bhoja's aggressive career suffered a serious set-back. Nor was Bhoja more successful against the Rāshṭrakūṭas. It appears that taking advantage of their internal dissensions Bhoja had taken the offensive but was defeated by Dhruvarāja II, the Rāshṭrakūṭa chief of Gujarāt, probably some time between A.D. 845 and 860. The Bagumra Plates,[44] which record the defeat of Bhoja, refer to him as 'united in fortune and surrounded by crowds of noble kinsmen', and also as 'having conquered all the regions of the world.' This unimpeachable testimony to the great power and eminence acquired by Bhoja at the beginning of his reign is fully in keeping with what has been said above about his early successes. Whether his defeat preceded or followed his discomfiture at the hands of Devapāla we cannot say, but one probably reacted on the other, and the two together completed his disaster.

Bhoja had probably also to fight with the Kalachuri king Kokkalla I. There are three references in epigraphic records regarding the relation between the two which at first appear somewhat contradictory. The Bilhari inscription[45] relates that, after having conquered the whole earth, Kokkalla set up two unprecedented columns of his fame, viz., Krishṇarāja in the South and Bhojadeva in the North. The Benares copper-plate[46] states that Kokkalla granted freedom from fear of Bhoja, Vallabharāja, Śrī-Harsha, king of Chitrakūṭa and the king Śaṅkaragaṇa. According to the Amoda plates[47] Kokkalla 'raided the treasuries of the Karṇāṭa, Vaṅga, Gurjara, Koṅkana and Śākambharī kings, and also of those born of the Turushka and Raghu families.'

44 *IA*, XII, p. 179.
45 *EI*, I, p. 264.
46 *EI*, II, p. 306.
47 *EI*, p. XIX, 78.

As Kokkalla died before A.D. 888,[48] his contemporary Bhoja must be the Pratihāra ruler Bhoja I, and not Bhoja II, as some have supposed. Now the relation between the two seems to be friendly, at least not hostile, if we take into consideration only the first two references But among the list of rulers, whose treasuries he raided, are included the Gurjara king and a ruler of the Raghu family, one of which at least must refer to the Pratihāras. It would then appear that Kokkalla at first invaded the dominions of Bhoja I but later helped him against a powerful foe. Among the other chiefs mentioned in the extracts quoted above, Śrī-Harsha (probably the Guhila chief of that name), Śaṅkaragaṇa, the Kalachuri ruler of Sarayūpāra, and the Śākambharī kings of the Chāhamāna family were all vassals of Bhoja.[49] It is therefore likely that Kokkalla joined Bhoja and his feudatories against a powerful foe, and thus granted them freedom from fear. But in the early stage Bhoja and his feudatories probably suffered at his hands.[50]

The reverses sustained by Bhoja had serious repercussion on his power and authority. This is most clearly seen in the renewed power of the Jodhpur branch of the Pratihāras. As we have seen above, Bāuka's power was curbed and Bhoja regained possession of Gurjaratrā by the year A.D. 843. But Bāuka's step-brother and successor Kakkuka once more established the independence of the family. Two of his inscriptions, dated A.D. 861[51], not only refer to his great exploits in right royal style, but make specific reference to Gurjaratrā and other provinces as forming part of his dominions.

We must therefore conclude that the attempts of Bhoja I to re-establish the glory of his family during the first part of his reign proved a failure. It was not probably till more than thirty years had passed since his accession that he made a second attempt to establish his supremacy. Perhaps we get an allusion to these renewed efforts in the Gwalior inscription (no. 14) of the year A.D. 876 which describes him as bent upon 'conquering the three worlds.'[52] The times were now indeed very favourable to him. The death of Devapāla had removed a great and powerful adversary. The weakness and pacific disposition of his successors, and possibly also internal dissensions in the Pāla dominions, created a favourable situation and Bhoja seized the opportunity to strike a decisive blow.

48 *IHQ*. XIII, pp. 483-84.

49 *Ibid*.

50 Cf. the author's paper on this subject in *PIHC*, Cuttack Session (1949). pp. 123-26.

51 *JRAS*, 1895, p. 513; *EI*, IX, p. 277.

52 *EI*, I, p. 158.

A few scattered notices in different records seem to indicate that Bhoja made elaborate preparations for this expedition by enlisting the support of a number of powerful ruling families that were now rising into prominence. The Kahla plates (no. 5) inform us that Guṇāmbhodhideva, the Chedi ruler of Sarayūpāra (Gorakhpur district), who obtained some territories from Bhojadeva, snatched away the sovereignty of the Gauḍas. As Guṇāmbhodhideva flourished in the latter half of the ninth century A.D., we can easily presume that he joined Bhoja in his expedition against Gauḍa (Bengal) and obtained territory from him as the reward for his help.

It is also very likely that the famous Chedi ruler Kokkalladeva of Tripurī also helped Bhoja in this expedition. As noted above, he probably joined Bhoja and his feudatories against a powerful foe. As Kokkalla also claims to have helped the Rāshṭrakūṭa king, we may naturally conclude that he helped Bhoja against his other great enemy, the Pālas. Bhoja was also assisted by his feudal chiefs, particularly the Guhilots. As noted above, Harsharāja of this family helped Bhoja in his northern campaigns in the early part of his reign. Guhila II, the son of Harsharāja, claims to have defeated the Gauḍa king and levied tribute from princes in the east (no. 4), and may thus be easily presumed to have joined the eastern expedition of Bhoja.

Loyally helped by these, and probably many other chiefs, Bhoja had perhaps little difficulty in defeating the unwarlike Pāla king Nārāyaṇapāla. Though no details of this campaign are known, the fact that the whole of the Pāla empire to the west of Magadha passed into the hands of the Pratihāras leaves no doubt on the result of the conflict. Further, as we shall see, not only Magadha, but even a considerable part of North Bengal formed a part of the dominions of Bhoja's successor, and it is more than probable that these conquests were at least partially achieved even during the reign of Bhoja.

Bhoja had now only one rival left, the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Here also the situation turned entirely in his favour. The Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishna II was involved in a life and death struggle with the Eastern Chālukya prince Guṇaga-Vijayāditya III who overran his dominions and even plundered the devastated city of Stambha (above, pp. 464, 517). Whether there was any alliance or understanding between Bhoja and this ruler of the Andhra country, as in the days of Nāgabhaṭa II, we cannot say, but certain it is that war also broke out between Bhoja and Krishna II. Bhoja probably took the offensive. According to a Pratihāra record[53] Bhoja defeated Kṛishṇa II, pro-

bably on the bank of the Narmadā, and drove him to the south of the river. Even according to the Rashṭrakūṭa records,[54] Bhoja took possession not only of Kheṭaka (Kaira district, Gujarat) but also of the region around it. It would then appear that Bhoja, after defeating Kṛishṇa II, occupied Malwa, advanced towards Gujarāt and at first obtained considerable success. The Rāshṭrakūṭa records, however, assert that Kṛishṇa II soon retrieved his losses. He not only recovered the Kheṭaka region, but also advanced in Malwa, and a sanguinary battle took place between him and the Pratihāra army at Ujjayinī which made a deep impress upon posterity. This battle took place some time between A.D. 878 and 888 (*supra*, pp. 463-64). It is generally held, on the strength of the Rāshṭrakūṭa records, that Bhoja was defeated in it and lost Malwa. But this is by no means certain. The Rāshṭrakūṭa records do not assert this, nor even openly claim a decisive victory. On the other hand, Malwa certainly formed a part of the Pratihāra empire in the reign of Bhoja's successor. It is therefore more reasonable to suppose that Malwa, which was conquered by Bhoja continued in the possession of his family. An inscription at Partabgarh (no. 10) mentions a local Chāhamāna dynasty as a source of great pleasure of king Bhojadeva. It has been rightly assumed that these Chāhamānas acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pratihāra king Bhoja I and helped him in his wars against the Rāshṭrakūṭas On the whole a careful comparison of the Rāshṭrakūṭa and Pratihāra records leaves the impression that Bhoja achieved conspicuous success against the Rāshṭrakūṭas, who were too weak and distracted at home to assume the offensive against the Pratihāras.

With the two rival powers thus laid low, Bhoja had a unique opportunity of realizing the imperial ambitions which Vatsarāja and Nāgabhaṭa had cherished in vain. Although the gradual stages in the growth of his empire are not known to us we can form some idea of its extent from literary and epigraphic evidences.

An inscription, found at Pehowa,[55] shows that the Karnal district in Haryana was included within the dominions of Bhoja. But that his sovereignty once extended even further into this province is hinted at in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (v. 151). We are told that Śaṅkaravarman, king of Kashmir, 'caused the sovereign power, which the superior king Bhoja had seized, to be given up to the scion of the Thakkiya family.' As Śaṅkaravarman ascended the throne in A.D. 883,

53 *IA*, XIX, p. 174.
54 *IA*, XIII, p. 56; *EI*, IX p. 31.
55 *EI*, I, p. 184.

there can be no hesitation in identifying 'the superior king Bhoja' with the Pratihāra emperor Bhoja I. It would then follow that Bhoja had seized sovereignty of some territory, near the border of Kashmir, which Śaṅkaravarman later wrested from the Pratihāras, either during the reign of Bhoja or, more probably, from his successor. Although the locality cannot be exactly determined, we may reasonably presume that Bhoja established his suzerainty over a considerable part of Haryana and the Panjab, almost right up to the borders of Kashmir.

The Muslim chronicles, to which reference will be made later, seem to indicate that Bhoja's dominions extended up to the Muslim principality in Sindh and included the Kāthiāwār peninsula. The Una grants (no. 3) also show that the Saurāshṭra-*maṇḍala* was included in his empire. In the east the Chedis of Gorakhpur acknowledged his suzerainty (no. 5) and so did probably also the Chandellas, as we shall see later. Although it is not possible, in the absence of positive data, to define more precisely the boundaries of Bhoja's empire, it may be presumed to have included nearly the whole of Northern India with the exception of Kashmir, Sindh, Bihar, Bengal and certain parts of Central India.

Bhoja ruled over this vast empire with his capital at Kanauj, which was once more raised to the dignity of an imperial city and enjoyed this distinction for more than a century. It is unfortunate that we possess no account of the personal history of this great empire-builder. All that we know is that his tutelary deity was goddess Bhagavatī and that he was known by several other names such as *Prabhāsa*, *Ādivarāha* and *Mihira*. It is also likely that he married Kalāvatī, the daughter of the Chāhamāna Chandrarāja.[56] His coins, known as 'Ādi-varāha-dramma,' have come down to us and will be described later. We also possess a short glimpse of his reign from an Arab account, which is generally supposed to have been composed by merchant Sulaiman in A.D. 851.[57] This account refers to the great power and resources of the Juzr, king of Kanauj, undoubtedly meaning a Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler, and if the date is really A.D. 851, or even somewhat later, we can easily identify him as king Bhoja I. Referring to him the Arab writer observes:

56 We learn from the ins. no. 6 that the Chāhamāna princess was given in marriage to the king of Kanauj. As her grandfather Guvāka I was a feudatory of Nāgabhaṭa II, it is likely that the king of Kanauj who married her was no other than Bhoja I.

57 But Dr. Nainar has adduced good grounds against this view. *Arab Geographers' Knowledge of South India*. See also Sastri. *Foreign Notices*, p. 22.

'This king maintains numerous forces and no other Indian prince has so fine a cavalry. He is unfriendly to the Arabs... Among the princes of India there is no greater foe of the Muhammadan faith than he. His territories form a tongue of land. He has got riches, and his camels and horses are numerous... There is no country in India more safe from robbers.'[58]

Besides paying tribute to the great power and riches of the Pratihāra king, the Muslim writer draws pointed attention to the fact that he was a sworn and inveterate enemy of the Muslims. This was specially striking by way of contrast to the Rāshṭrakūṭa king who is referred to as a great friend of the Muslims. The description of the territory as a tongue of land evidently refers to the physical configuration of Kāthiāwār Peninsula with which part of the kingdom the Muslim merchants were naturally more familiar than with the rest of it.

Even this very brief sketch throws interesting light on the career of Bhoja, who was powerful enough to maintain peace within his kingdom and defend it against external aggressions. There is no doubt that Bhoja was the most outstanding political figure in India in the second half of the ninth century A.D. He had a long reign of more than 46 years, for two of his known dates are A.D. 836 and 882.[59] Probably he ruled for more than half a century and died some time about A.D. 890, leaving the vast empire acquired by his prowess to his son Mahendrapāla.

VI. MAHENDRAPĀLA

Mahendrapāla must have ascended the throne in or before A.D. 893 which is his earliest known date (no. 3). As already hinted at, he might have come into conflict with Śaṅkaravarman, king of Kashmir, and ceded some territories in the Panjab. But, with this somewhat doubtful reservation, he not only maintained intact the vast empire inherited by him but even probably extended its boundaries, specially in the east. Seven records of his reign, found in South Bihar and North Bengal, with dates ranging between his regnal years 2 and 19,[60] clearly indicate his mastery over these regions fairly early in his reign. It is just possible, as suggested above, that these conquests were wholly or partially achieved, even during the reign of Bhoja. But there is no doubt that Mahendrapāla consolidated these conquests and exercised full supremacy, not only over Magadha but even over Varendra (North

58 *HIED*, I, p. 4.
59 Barah Cp (no, 12) and Pehowa Ins. (*EI*, I, p. 184).
60 *HB*, I p. 175.

Bengal), the ancestral home of his hereditary enemies, the Pālas. Similarly, epigraphic records clearly demonstrate that the suzerainty of Mahendrapāla was unquestionably accepted by his feudatories in the Kāthiāwār Peninsula (no. 3). Between these two extremes his records have been found in Haryana, Jhansi district, and Ayodhyā, and we have epigraphic evidence of Pratihāra supremacy, even in later times, over Malwa and Rājasthān.[61] It may, therefore, be said, without any exaggeration, that the Pratihāra empire now stretched almost from the Himālaya to the Vindhyas and from the Eastern to the Western Ocean, the boundaries given for the Pāla empire by the court-poet of Devapāla.

Unfortunately we know hardly anything about the life and reign of Mahendrapāla. His name appears also as *Mahīndrapāla* and *Mahendrāyudha,* and we know of his epithet *Nirbhaya-narendra* or *Nirbhaya-rāja* (the fearless king). His *guru,* or spiritual preceptor, Rājaśekhara, occupies a distinguished place in literature, and his works describe the glory and splendour of the imperial city of Kanauj. Mahendrapāla's last known date is A.D. 907-8 (no. 7), and he probably died not long afterwards.

VII. MAHĪPĀLA

The emperor Mahendrapāla had at least two queens, Dehanāgādevī and Mahādevī (or Mahīdevī), who bore him two sons, *viz.,* Bhoja II and Vināyakapāla, both of whom ruled after him. Bhoja II certainly ascended the throne before Vināyakapāla, one of whose known dates is A.D. 931 (no. 9). But Mahīpāla, another son of Mahendrapāla, is known to have been ruling in A.D. 914 and 917 (no. 8).

So far we are on sure ground, but then we have an epigraphic record which mentions a king Devapāla, son of king Kshitipāla, as ruling in A.D. 948-49 (no. 7). The locality of this record, and the fact that Bhoja and Mahendrapāla are mentioned in its earlier part, make it highly probable that the two rulers Kshitipāla and his son Devapāla belonged to the imperial Pratihāra family. If we accept this view it is possible to arrange the course of succession, after Mahendrapāla, somewhat as follows:

1. Bhoja II, son of Mahendrapāla
2. Mahīpala ,,
3. Vināyakapāla ,,
4. Kshitipāla
5. Devapāla, son of Kshitipāla

61 Although these inscriptions (nos. 4, 5, 10) belong to later times, it is not likely that any successor of Mahendrapāla made these conquests.

But the question of succession is complicated by some other considerations. A king Devapāla, with the epithet *Hayapati* (Lord of Horses), and his father Herambapāla are mentioned in a contemporary inscription[62] in such a way as to indicate that they were powerful kings. It has been suggested accordingly that Hayapati Devapāla is identical with no. 5 in the above list. If this suggestion be accepted, we are bound to hold that no. 4, Kshitipāla, was also known as Herambapāla. Now it is exceedingly curious that Heramba is a synonym of Vināyaka, and Kshiti of Mahī. It is, therefore, reasonable to go one step further and presume that Mahīpala, Vināyakapāla, Kshitipāla, and Herambapāla were all but different designations of one and the same king. This theory is based on the identity of the two kings named Devapāla mentioned in two different records, which is not, however, accepted by all. It also involves the somewhat unusual assumption that one and the same king has been referred to by so many different names in contemporary official records. But the theory has the great merit of simplifying—perhaps oversimplifying—the issue by bringing into order a mass of confusing data. And for the sake of convenience, if for no other reason, we may provisionally accept it as a working hypothesis.

We may therefore hold that Bhoja II succeeded his father Mahendrapāla, but after a brief reign of four or five years made room for his brother Mahīpāla,[63] who was also known as Kshitipāla, Vināyakapāla and Herambapāla. It has been suggested by some scholars that Mahīpāla rebelled against his brother and usurped the throne. But though such a course of events is by no means unlikely, and satisfactorily explains the overwhelming disaster which engulfed the Pratihāra empire within a few years, there is no positive evidence to indicate that there was a struggle for succession to the throne. The statement in the Kalachuri records that Kokkalladeva I 'set up Bhojadeva' and granted him 'freedom from fear' forms the chief foundation for this theory.[64] But, as noted above (p. 633), Bhojadeva almost certainly refers to Bhoja I, and even if it refers to Bhoja II, we have no reason to hold that he asked for the Kalachuri aid against his brother. There are good grounds to believe that the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishṇa II invaded the dominions of the Pratihāras and occupied the Gaṅgā-Yamunā Doab, though this has been denied by some scholars.[65] It is conceivable that Bhoja II or his brother might have

62 *EI*, I, p. 124.

63 N. Ray identifies Bhoja II with Mahīpāla (*IA*, 1928, p. 232).

64 *THK*, p. 255.

65 *PIHC*, VI, p. 169.

been protected by some powerful king on an occasion like this. This would satisfactorily explain the statement that a Chandella king placed Kshitipāla on the throne, as will be noted later, without necessarily implying a fratricidal war of succession.

Suspicion about a contested succession also arises from the fact that while the grant of Vināyakapāla, dated A.D. 931, refers to his elder brother Bhoja II as his predecessor, the earlier grant, dated A.D. 917, does not mention Bhoja II at all, and represents Mahīpāla as having succeeded Mahendrapāla. The case is analogous to the Bhitari seal and other records of the Imperial Guptas (pp. 71, 78ff) which omit altogether the name of Skanda-gupta in drawing up the genealogy of the Imperial Guptas. There are similar other cases in Indian history, and all these may be simply due to the not unusual practice of tracing only direct descent by omitting all references to collateral lines. But it has been urged by some that Bhoja's name was deliberately omitted by Mahīpala, the successful rebel. But if we accept the identity of Mahīpāla and Vināyakapāla, one is hard put to it to explain the omission of Bhoja's name in one grant, and not in the other, by the rebellious brother. It has been argued that with the lapse of time memories of the old rivalry and hatred passed away and so the name of Bhoja appears in the grant of A.D. 931 though not in that of A.D. 917.[66] But this is at best questionable.

Save for the two very doubtful episodes of a fratricidal war and a Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion, we have no knowledge of any event in the reign of Bhoja II. Mahīpāla, who succeeded him, probably about A.D. 912, reigned in full glory over the vast empire. The Haddala grant,[67] dated A.D. 914, gives us his earliest known date and proves his suzerainty over the distant province of Kāthiāwār Peninsula. Al Mas'ūdī, who visited India in A.D. 915-16, refers to the wide extent of the Pratihāra empire and the rich resources of its ruler, who must be identified with Mahīpāla. We are told that he was rich in horses and camels and maintained four armies in four directions, each numbering 700,000 or 900,000 men.[68]

Al Mas'ūdī adds that the Pratihāra emperor was at war with both his neighbouring states, the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom in the south and the Muslim principality of Multan in the west. The aggressive imperial policy of Mahīpāla is also referred to by poet Rājaśekhara, the spiritual teacher (*guru*) of Mahendrapāla. He graced the court of Mahīpāla and refers to him as the 'pearl jewel of the lineage of Raghu' and

66 *THK*, p. 255.
67 *IA*, XII, p. 195.
68 *HIED*, I, p. 21.

the '*Mahārājādhirāja* of Āryāvarta' (Emperor of Northern India). In the introduction to his drama *Bāla Bharāta* or *Prachaṇḍa-Paṇḍava*, Rājaśekhara mentions a large number of peoples and countries defeated or conquered by Mahīpāla, such as the Muralas, the Mekalas, the, Kaliṅgas, the Keralas, the Kulūtas, the Kuntalas and the Ramaṭhas. Of these, the Kulūtas undoubtedly occupied the present kulu district on the upper course of the Beas,[69] and the Ramaṭhas were a neighbouring people. The Kaliṅgas lived in the Eastern Deccan coast, the Mekalas in the Mekala Hills (M. P.), and the Kuntalas in Western Deccan. The location of the Keralas is uncertain, but they, too, probably lived in the Eastern Deccan. Whether Mahīpāla actually conquered all these peoples, specially those in the distant regions of the Deccan, may be doubted, but possibly he had occasions to fight them and gained some victories.

In any case, the available data, mentioned so far, reflect the undiminished splendour and glory of the Pratihāra empire. But the fight with the Rāshṭrakūṭas which Al Mas'ūdī refers to, and which probably began in Bhoja's region (*supra*, pp. 634-35, 640), soon led to a disaster. We learn from the Rāshṭrakūṭa records that king Indra III invaded North India; he conquered Ujjayinī, crossed the Yamunā and devastated the city of Mahodaya (Kanauj).[69a] Further details are given in a Kanarese poetical work called *Pampabhārata*. We are told that Narasiṁha, a feudatory of Indra III, took a prominent part in the expedition. It ended in a complete defeat of king Mahīpāla who 'fled, as if struck by thunderbolts, staying neither to eat, nor rest, nor pick himself up, while Narasiṁha, pursuing, bathed his horses at the junction of the Gaṅgā (and the Yamunā).'[70]

Thus according to the records of the enemy, Mahīpāla suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Indra III who occupied the capital city of Kanauj and sacked it. Mahīpāla had even to flee for his life, being hotly pursued by the hostile soldiers as far as Allahabad.[71] But even if we accept these details as fairly correct, we cannot regard the result as decisive. There is no doubt that the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion was more of the nature of a raid than a regular conquest. The Rāshṭrakūṭas could not stay long in North India to consolidate their conquests. Mahīpāla also, after the first shock of the disastrous defeat,

69 For a detailed history of this people, see Kalyan Kumar Dasgupta, A *Tribal History of Ancient India: A Numismatic Approach*, pp. 71-87.

69a *EI*, VII, pp. 29-30. Above, p. 468.

70 *AR*, p. 102.

71 Altekar thinks that Mahīpāla fled towards Gorakhpur, and Narasiṁha, after pursuing him for a while proceeded to Allahabad on his way back to the Deccan (*ibid.*, n. 46).

rallied his forces and retrieved his fortunes. The statement by Rājaśekhara that Mahīpāla defeated the Kuntalas and other peoples of the Deccan may refer to his later success against the Rāshṭrakuṭas, which is also perhaps reflected in the dramatic work *Chaṇḍa-Kāuśika* by Kshemīsvara.[72] The fact that even so late as A.D. 946 Malwa still formed part of the Pratihara dominions (no. 10) unerringly indicates that the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion was a passing phase and did not seriously cripple the Pratihāra empire.

In his effort to re-establish the fortunes of his family Mahīpāla must have received substantial help from his loyal feudatory chiefs. The Chandella record of a later date claims that King Harsha placed Kshitipāla again on the throne.[73] It is said of the Guhilot chief Bhaṭṭa, the grandson of Harsharāja who helped Bhoja I (p. 632), that at the command of his liege-lord he defeated in battle 'the king of the south' at a time of great danger, when the territory of his overlord was invaded by foreign soldiers and everything was in confusion (no 4). Bhāmāna, the feudatory Kalachuri ruler of Gorakhpur, also boasts of having conquered Dhārā (no. 5). All these may be regarded as alluding to the great counter-attack that Mahīpāla organised against the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

It reflects no small credit upon the personality and resources of Mahīpāla, that he not only survived the great disaster but could rally his forces and recover his empire by driving away the Rāshṭra-kūṭas beyond the Narmadā. Whether he was in a position to recover all the imperial territories it is difficult to say. The epigraphic records prove that the Pratihāras were in possession of Benaras in A.D. 931 (no. 9), Chanderi (Narwar) in A.D. 942[74] and Malwa in A.D. 946 (no. 10).

72 In a verse in this work king Mahīpāla is said to be the incarnation of Chandragupta, and the Karṇāṭas, of the Nandas. Obviously, this implies that the King Mahīpāla defeated the Karṇāṭas. Some have identified this Mahīpāla with the Pāla ruler Mahīpāla I, but it is more likely that he was the Pratihāra emperor Mahīpāla I and the Karṇāṭas were the Rāshṭrakūṭa forces of Indra III. For a full discussion on this point see *HBR*, I, pp. 143-44. and *JOR*, VI, pp. 191-98.

73 The inscription (*EI*, I, p. 122) being fragmentary, the connection between Harshadeva and the restoration of *Kshitipāla* is not absolutely certain. Hoernle takes the reference to be to Yaśovarman (*JRAS*, 1904, p. 614). But the name of Yaśovarman does not actually occur in the extant portion of the record, and it is also more likely from the chronological point of view that it was Harsha who helped Kshitipāla in recovering the throne. It is also more probable that it refers to the restoration after Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion, though Tripathi contends that Harsha helped Kshitipāla in his war of succession against his brother Bhoja II (*THK*, pp. 256-7).

74 *ASIAR*, 1924-25, p 168. The author of the report is obviously wrong when he includes the place in the Chandella kingdom on the ground that Vināyakapāla, the ruler of the locality is mentioned in a Chandella inscription. There can be no doubt that he was the Pratihāra ruler of that name.

We must therefore credit Mahīpāla with having recovered a large part of his empire if not the whole of it. There is, however, no doubt that the prestige of the Imperial Pratihāras suffered a severe blow, and the gradual decline in the power and authority of the empire, which we notice from this time, was largely due to the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion. The sack of the capital city and the flight of the emperor for life, hotly pursued, by the enemy, could not but have had a serious repercussion on the morale of the imperial governors and feudatories.[75] These gradually asserted independence and new states arose challenging the supremacy of the Pratihāra empire. All these disturbing signs, heralding the downfall of the empire, made their appearance in the second quarter of the tenth century A.D., as will be seen from the detailed history of the Chandellas, Chedis, Paramāras and other dynasties in Chapter XXVI.

Even the Rāshtrakūṭa menace was not wholly over. Towards the close of Mahīpāla's reign he had to face an invasion of Kṛishṇa III. A Rāshṭrakūṭa record, dated A.D. 940, boastfully mentions that 'on hearing of the conquest of all the strongholds (by Kṛishṇa III) in the southern regions simply by means of his angry glance, the hope about Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa vanished from the heart of the Gurjara.'[76] This has been taken to imply that the two famous fortresses of the Pratihāras were captured by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king some time before A.D. 940. It has been contended on the other hand that here is nothing in the above passage to indicate that the Rāshṭrakūṭa army occupied the forts of Kālañjara and Chitrakūṭa.[77] It simply means that the victories of Kṛishṇa III in the south 'acted as a bulwark protecting these forts from falling into the hands of the Gurjara ruler who was evidently entertaining ambitions against them.'[78] In other words, these forts, which originally belonged to the Gurjara ruler, had evidently passed into the hands of some other power who could reasonably expect the Rāshṭrakūṭa help, if any attempt were made to recover them. So on hearing of the brilliant victories of the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the South the Gurjara king lost hope of capturing or recovering them. This seems to be the more reasonable view. As we shall see later, the fort of Kālañjara passed into the hands of the Chandellas. These nominally owed allegiance to the Pratihāra emperor, and probably seized the fortress, or, according

75 Concrete examples of the defiant spirit of the feudatories will be given later; some of these may be referred to this time.

76 Deoli Pl. (v. 25) *EI*, V, p. 188.

77 *AR*, p. 113. *THK*, pp. 267-68.

78 *JOR*, XVI, p. 157.

to the first interpretation, recovered it from the Rāshṭrakūṭas but evidently kept it in their own possession. This was an unmistakable sign of the impending dissolution of the empire. Indeed, everything indicates that although Mahīpāla's reign ended in outward glory and splendour as evidenced by the flattering description of the poet Rāja-śekhara, the seeds of decay had already been sown and were to bear fruit at no distant date.

VIII. THE SUCCESSORS OF MAHĪPĀLA

The period following the death of Mahīpāla is the most obscure in the annals of the Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauj. In particular, the question of succession to the throne is one of the most baffling in Indian history on account of the uncertainties mentioned above regarding the successors of Mahendrapāla I.

Vināyakapāla I ruled till at least A.D. 942,[79] and was succeeded by his son Mahendrapāla II, whose only known date is A.D. 945-6 (no. 10). The epigraphic records reveal the existence of the following kings during the next 15 years.

1. Devapāla (A.D. 948-9), son of Kshitipāla (no. 7)
2. Vināyakapāla II[80] (A.D. 953-4)
3. Mahīpāla II (A.D. 955)
4. Vijayapāla (A.D. 960), successor of Kshitipāla (ins. No. 11)

The relation between these kings being unknown, different scholars have advanced different theories on the subject.[81] As any one theory is almost as good as another, and none rests on sufficiently strong grounds, it will serve no useful purpose to discuss them in detail. But the following alternative genealogies would give the reader some idea of the different views.

I. Mahendrapāla II *alias* Devapāla (no. 1)

|

Vināyakapāla II (no 2) *alias* Mahīpāla II (no. 3) *alias* Kshitipāla II

|

Vijayapāla (no. 4)

79 *ASIAR*, 1924-25, p. 168, n. 74.

80 *EI*, XXII, p. 122.

81 *Bh. List*, p. 400; *IA*, LVII, p. 234; *THK*, pp. 271-75.

II. Mahendrapāla I

Bhoja II *alias* Mahīpāla I *alias* Kshitipāla I — Vināyakapāla I

Devapāla (no. 1) — Mahendrapāla II

Mahīpāla II (no. 3) *alias* Kshitipāla II — Vināyakapāla II (no. 2)

Vijayapāla (no. 4)

III. Mahīpāla I *alias* Kshitipāla I *alias* Vināyakapāla I

Mahendrapāla II — Devapāla (no. 1) — Vijayapāla (no. 4)

Vināyakapāla II (no. 2)

In the last scheme there is no reference to Mahīpāla II (no. 3) for it is argued that there is no sufficient ground to hold that he was a Pratihāra emperor, and, for all we know, he may be a vassal ruler who sometimes assumed imperial titles, as proved by the Rajor inscription (no. 11).

Similarly, there is also difference of opinion whether Vināyakapāla II is a separate king or is to be identified with the first king of that name. The name occurs in the last line of the Khajuraho inscription of the Chandella ruler Dhaṅga, dated A.D. 954.[82] It has no connection with the preceding text of the inscription but is simply introduced at the end by way of saying that 'Vināyakapāladeva was protecting the earth'. There is no doubt that this king, whose name is invoked as a suzerain by Dhaṅga, belonged to the Imperial Pratihāra family. It is, however, to be noted that the Chandella ruler Dhaṅga claims in the very same inscription to have been the master of territory extending up to the Yamunā in the north, Kālañjara in the east (or north-east) and Gopādri (Gwalior) in the west (or north-west). He thus ruled over a large part of the Pratihāra empire, including the two famous strongholds, Kālañjara and Gwalior, which belonged to it since the days of Nāgabhaṭa II, if not earlier. Not to leave us in any doubt, the same Dhaṅga is said, in another record, to have obtained the empire after defeating the Kānyakubja king, who can only be the Pratihāra emperor. In view of all this the reference to

82 *EI*, I, p. 129.

Vināyakapāla as the suzerain king protecting the earth, in the official record of Dhaṅga, must be regarded as very curious, to say the least of it. We can only explain this anomaly by supposing that the official records put in this name simply as an old convention and out of respect for the old emperor who at one time really exercised effective suzerainty. Accordingly it is held by some that the king Vināyakapāla in the Khajuraho inscription really refers to the Pratihāra emperor Vināyakapāla I. But as he must have died before A.D. 946, the known date of his son and successor Mahendrapāla II, it has been suggested that the Khajuraho inscription, though originally drafted earlier than A.D. 946, was actually set up in A.D. 954 without any modification of the suzerain's name. But this explanation is not accepted by some scholars who naturally infer from the Khajuraho inscription that there was a second king named Vināyakapāla in the imperial Pratihāra family, ruling in A.D. 954.

In view of this great uncertainty about the succession we are unable to give any definite account of the imperial Pratihāras after the reign of Mahendrapāla II. We know from the single record (no. 10) that we possess of this emperor, that the Chāhamānas of Partabgarh, in South-eastern Rājasthān, acknowledged him as their suzerain, and that both Ujjayinī and Maṇḍapikā (Mandu) were being ruled by his governors in the year A.D. 945-46. But this may be regarded as the very last record reflecting the power and glory of the great Pratihāra empire. For the epigraphic records of later dates unmistakably indicate its decline and rapid decay.

Reference has been made above to several Chāhamāna feudatories helping their overlords, the Pratihāra emperors. But Vākpatirāja of the same dynasty, who flourished about the middle of the tenth century A.D., is said to have harassed Tantrapāla, when coming to the Ananta province with the behests of his overlord, who can only be either Pratihāra Mahīpāla or one of his successors. The son of this Vākpatirāja, named Sindhurāja, claims to have imprisoned a number of rulers who were feudatories of the Pratihāras and the great Pratihāra emperor of the Raghu family had to come to the Chāhamāna king in order to secure their release (no. 6, vv 16, 19). The Guhila chief Allaṭa, whose known dates are A.D. 951 and 953, is said to have killed in battle Devapāla, who may be identified with the Pratihāra king of that name.[83]

Reference has been already made to the Chandella records which leave no doubt that Dhaṅga had wrested a considerable part

83 *DHNI*, II, p. 1170.

of the Pratihāra empire before the year A.D. 954. An inscription (no. 11), dated A.D. 959-60 and found at Rājorgaḍh, 28 miles to the south-west of Alwar, records an order issued to his officers by the *Mahārājādhirāja, Parameśvara,* the illustrious Mathanadeva of the Gurjara-Pratihāra lineage, residing at Rājyapura. As Rājyapura is undoubtedly to be identified with Rājorgaḍh, we must hold that Mathanadeva, probably a member of the imperial Pratihāra clan, had set up an independent state in the Alwar region although, like the Chandellas, he invokes in his official record the name of the Pratihāra emperor Vijayapāladeva as his suzerain.

For more than half a century after this we do not hear anything more about any Pratihāra emperor. But we have indirect references to the further disintegration of the empire. The Rāshṭrakūṭa king Kṛishṇa III led a second expedition to Northern India about A.D. 963.[84] One of his feudatories the Gaṅga Mārasiṁha, so distinguished himself in this campaign that he got the epithet 'the king of the Gurjaras' (pp. 478-79). This shows that the campaign was mainly directed against the Pratihāras and they fared the worst. The victorious Rāshṭrakūṭas left, by way of a permanent memorial of their northern conquest, a short inscription in Kanarese engraved on a stone slab at Jura, 12 miles from Maihar, a modern railway station in Bundelkhand. Nearer home, king Vajradāman of the newly founded Kachchhapaghāta dynasty of Gwalior, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the ruler of Kānyakubja some time before A.D. 977.[85] The feudatory Chāhamānas of Śākambharī, many of whose chiefs had helped their Pratihāra overlords in their expeditions against the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas (pp. 628, 635) asserted their independence, and so did probably also the Guhilots and other vassal states. The Paramāras and the Chaulukyas set up strong principalities, respectively in Malwa and Gujarāt, which had hitherto formed integral parts of the Pratihāra empire.

84 *EI*, XIX, pp. 287-89.

85 An inscription (*IA*, 1915, p. 36) in the temple of Sasbahu, at Gwalior; dated V, 1150 (A.D. 1093), records that Vajradāman defeated a ruler of Gādhinagara, i.e., Kanauj, and conquered Gopādri (of Gwalior). As an inscription (*JASB*, XXXI, p. 393), dated V. 1034 (A.D. 977), of *Mahārājādhirāja* Vajradāman is found engraved on the pedestal of a Jaina image in Gwalior, he must have conquered this famous fortress before that date. As noted above, this stronghold of the Pratihāras passed into the hands of the Chandellas before A.D. 954. It is to be noted that Vajradāman claims to have conquered it after defeating the ruler of Kanauj. We must, therefore, hold that either the Pratihāra emperor recovered Kanauj from the Chandellas, some time between A.D. 954 and 977 or helped the Chandellas against Vajradāman when the latter invaded Gwalior. It is also not unlikely that although the Chandella ruler Dhaṅga was actually in possession of Gwalior, it was still nominally regarded as a part of the Pratihāra empire.

The history of these and other powers, which will be related in Chapter XXVI, leaves no doubt that as the tenth century was drawing to its close, the Pratihāra empire fell to pieces. When the curtain rises again, early in the eleventh century A.D., we find that the descendants of Bhoja and Mahendrapāla were still ruling over a small principality round about Kanauj. But the Pratihāra empire had vanished, and North India once more presented the political spectacle that inevitably followed the disruption of a great empire. The situation was rendered worse by the repeated invasions of the Ghaznavid sultans whose hammering blows almost shattered the political fabric of North India. Even then the Pratihāras remembered the rôle they had played in Indian history, and though shorn of power and glory, offered heroic and stubborn resistance to the Muslim invaders. All this will be related in the next volume. But before we conclude the history of the Pratihāra empire we must pay our tribute to it for having successfully defended the western frontier of India for more than two hundred years. Since the days of the Arab invasion, in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D., the Pratihāra empire stood as the bulwark of India's defence against the aggression of the Muslims from the west. This is clearly shown by the Arab writers themselves. They frankly admit that the Muslims were kept in check by the Pratihāras, and would have been driven away even from the principality of Multan if the Pratihāras were not deterred by their threat of breaking the idol of the Sun-god in that city which was revered all over India.[86] The Muslims could thus maintain their precarious foothold in the small principality of Sindh, conquered so long ago as A.D. 712, not by their inherent strength, but merely by playing on the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus. The Muslim writers tell us that while the Rāshṭrakūṭa kings befriended them, the imperial Pratihāras were their uncompromising enemies. So they were at the very beginning of their career, and so they remained till the very end. The older generations of historians naturally wondered why Islam, which had conquered the world, could not extend its power into the heart of India before the close of tenth century A.D. although it had obtained a footing in the Indus valley as early as the beginning of the eighth century. These historians indulged in vague speculations to explain this veritable miracle. But we may now offer the true explanation. It is the valour and resources of the Pratihāra emperors that kept the Muslim invaders at bay. So long as they remained powerful, the Muslims could not advance further beyond Multan, and all that they could do was to retain possession of it by playing upon the religious susceptibilities of

86 Cf. Ch. XIX.

the Pratihāras. It was not till the Pratihāra empire fell to pieces that the flood-gates of Muslim invasions were opened and deluged the whole of North India. The later history of India, by the contrast it affords, may be held up as the most eloquent testimony to the glorious rule of the imperial Pratihāras.

IMPORTANT INSCRIPTIONS

1. Gwalior Stone Inscription of Bhoja. *EI*, XVIII, p. 99.
2. Jodhpur Inscription of Bāuka. *EI*, XVIII, p. 87.
3. Two Grants of Chaulukya Chiefs of the Time of Mahendrapāla. *EI*, IX, p. 1.
4. Chatsu Inscription of the Guhilot Chief, Bālāditya. *EI*, XXII, p. 13.
5. Kahla plate of Kalachuri Soḍhadeva. *EI*, VII, p. 88.
6. Harsha Stone Inscription of the Chāhamāna Vigraharāja. *EI*, II, pp. 119 ff; *IA*, XLII, pp. 60 ff.
7. Siyadoni Inscription, *EI*, I, p. 162.
8. Asni Inscription of Mahīpāla (A.D. 917). *IA*, XVI, p. 173.
9. Bengal Asiatic Society's Copper-plate of Vināyakapāla (A.D. 931). *IA*, XV, p. 138.
10. Partabgarh Inscription of Mahendrapāla II (A.D. 946). *EI*, XV, p. 138.
11. Rajorgarh Inscription of Vijayapāla (A.D. 960). *EI*, III, p. 263.
12. Barah Copper-plate of Bhoja. *EI*, XIX, p. 15, XXIII, p. 242.
13. Daulatpura Copper-plate of Bhoja. *EI*, V, p. 208; *JBBRAS*, XXI, p. 410.
14. Gwalior Inscription of Bhoja dated V. 932, *EI*, I, p. 154.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

THE PĀLAS

I. THE ORIGIN

THE POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION of Bengal during the century that followed the death of Śaśāṅka has been described above (pp. 602 ff). A series of foreign invasions destroyed the solid political fabric that Śaśāṅka had built up. There was no central authority, and the whole country was divided into a number of petty principalities. Nearly a thousand years later, the Tibetan historian Tāranātha observed with reference to this period: 'In the five eastern provinces, Bhaṅgala, Oḍivisa (Orissa), and the rest, every Kshatriya, Grandee, Brāhmana, and merchant was a king in his own house (in the neighbourhood), but there was no king ruling over the country.'[1] Bhaṅgala, in the above passage, undoubtedly stands for a large part of Bengal, though it is not possible to define its limits. But there is no doubt that Tāranātha fairly describes the political condition of the whole of Bengal. For in a contemporary inscription, the Khalimpur copper-plate (no. I),[2] reference is made to *mātsya-nyāya,* prevailing in Bengal. This word which literally means 'fish-law,' is a well-known technical term used by ancient writers on polity. It denotes a state of political anarchy and confusion in which there is no order or authority and might alone is right, so that the strong can oppress the weak at will, as the larger fish in a pond devours the smaller ones.

The Khalimpur Copper-plate further informs us that in order to put an end to this *mātsya-nyāya,* or state of anarchy, Gopāla was elected king by the *prakṛitis.* Kielhorn, who edited this inscription, elucidated the above passage by saying that 'Gopāla was made king by the people to put an end to a lawless state of things in which everyone was the prey of his neighbour.' He evidently took the word

1. Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India,* translated in German by A. Schiefner (*Tāranātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien aus dem Tibetischen ubersetzi* von Anton Schiefner, St. Petersburg, 1869). Portions of this book were translated into English in *IA*, IV; p. 361, but the translation is not always accurate. For a full discussion of Lama Tāranātha's account of Bengal, cf. *IHQ*. XVI, pp. 219 ff, a summary of which is given in *HBR*, p. 182.

2. These numbers within brackets refer to the list of inscriptions given in Appendix at the end of this chapter.

prakṛiti in the sense of people, but it has been suggested that *prakṛiti* should be taken as a technical term meaning principal officers.[3] But as there was no strong and stable government in those days we can hardly think of an election of the king by principal officers in a state. It is therefore better to take the word *prakṛiti* in its ordinary and well-known sense of 'subjects' or 'general people,' as Kielhorn has done. But we need not literally interpret the passage to mean that there was a regular election of Gopāla as king by the vote of the common people, or by their representatives assembled in a meeting. Most likely the choice was originally made by a number of ruling chiefs and leading citizens, and finally endorsed by the people who could demonstrate their general approval by various means such as acclamation, general rejoicings etc. The chief thing to note in this connection is that the procedure must have involved, at the very initial stage, the willing surrender of authority and possibly abdication of the throne, on the part of a large number of warring chiefs. Such an act of voluntary submission on the part of men in power for the salvation of the country is a rare phenomenon in history. This uncommon spirit of self-sacrifice must have been inspired by a high degree of patriotism and a wise far-seeing statesmanship of no mean order, and no wonder that it ushered in a new era of glory and prosperity in the history of Bengal such as it has never known before or since. The episode of the election of Gopāla was long remembered in Bengal and developed in course of time into a strange semi-mythical legend which has been faithfully recorded by Tāranātha in the seventeenth century.[4]

II. GOPĀLA (*c.* A.D. 750-770)

We know very little of the antecedents and early history of Gopāla who was thus called to the throne in a grave emergency by the voice of the people. The Khalimpur Copper-plate (no. 1) merely tells us that his grandfather Dayitavishṇu was a learned man, and the fame of his father Vapyaṭa, who killed his enemies, spread over the whole world. These vague and general praises really do not mean very much and merely indicate that Gopāla was not born in a very high or distinguished, far less a royal, family.[5] His father was

3. *EHBP*, p. 112.
4. *HBR*, p. 184.
5. The epithet *Rājabhaṭādi-vaṁśa-patita*, applied to Dharmapāla in a contemporary Buddhist work, has led some to conclude that Dharmapāla was descended from Rājabhaṭa identical with Rājarāja or Rājarāja-Bhaṭa, the heir-apparent of Devakhaḍga (p. 605 above). For criticism of this interpretation and other views on the origin of the Pāla family, cf. *HBR*, pp. 98-100.

a soldier, and probably Gopāla followed the same profession. He must have won fame and distinction in battles; for otherwise he would not have been chosen the head of the state in those troublesome times. It is probable, though by no means certain, that he was born in Varendra, for in the *Rāmacharita*,[6] this province has been referred to as *janaka-bhū* or ancestral home of the Pālas. He was a Buddhist and so were his successors,[7] and probably also his ancestors.

Of the events of Gopāla's reign also practically nothing is known. Two inscriptions (nos. 2-3) of his grandson refer in somewhat extravagant terms to his vast army and numerous victorious military campaigns. It is said that after having conquered the earth as far as the sea, Gopāla released his elephants as there was no further need of any military expedition. These general statements can hardly be relied upon, but on the whole we may conclude that Gopāla consolidated his political authority over the whole of Bengal, and left it in peace and prosperity. For, otherwise, it is difficult to believe that his son would have been in a position to undertake military campaigns from one end of North India to the other.

If the reference to victorious military campaigns of Gopāla is based on historical truth, we must presume that Gopāla had to fight with some recalcitrant chiefs in Bengal who did not voluntarily acknowledge his authority. This also follows from the statement made in later Pāla inscriptions (nos. 6-10) that Gopāla obtained enduring peace (for his kingdom) by defeating the attacks of *Kāmakārīs*. The word normally means 'those who do not acknowledge any authority and act wilfully', and evidently refers to the petty tyrants in Bengal. Some scholars have, however, taken the word to mean 'king of Kāmarūpa (Kāmaka) who is an enemy,' and thus inferred from the passage Gopāla's victory over the king of Kāmarūpa (Assam).[8] But this, as well as Gopāla's conquest of Magadha, noted by Tāranātha, though very probable, cannot be regarded as certain. All that we may reasonably conclude is that Gopāla checked the unruly elements and brought the whole of Bengal under his undivided sway, thereby ensuring the peace and prosperity of the country.

6. A contemporary account of the Pāla king Rāmapāla who flourished in the 11th-12th century A.D. A detailed account of this important poetical work will be given in the next volume in connection with the history of that king.

7. All the copper-plate grants of the Pāla kings begin with an invocation to the Buddha and the rulers are called *parama-saugata*.

8. *IHQ*, VII, pp. 531-32.

Gopāla ascended the throne about A.D. 750.[9] Tāranātha says that he ruled for forty-five years. According to *Mañjuśrīmūla-kalpa* he ruled for 27 years and died at the advanced age of eighty. But neither of the statements can be regarded as authentic. In view of the circumstances in which he was called to the throne, we may reasonably hold that he was neither very young and inexperienced nor very old at the time. As his son and grandson had both long reigns, covering between them seventy years or more, it is not likely that Gopāla, too, lived to be eighty years or had a very long reign. We may therefore provisionally hold that he ruled for about 20 years, from *c.* A.D. 750 to 770.

III. DHARMAPĀLA (*c.* A.D. 770-810).

Dharmapāla, the son of Gopāla and Deddadevī, succeeded his father. We get some interesting account of his reign from the Khalimpur Copper-plate (no. 1) which was issued in the year 32 of his reign. It refers in most extravagant terms to the mighty army and the victorious military campaigns of Dharmapāla, but gives no details. Fortunately we have other evidences which throw light on his eventful military career. It is not possible in the present state of our knowledge to arrange all the known events of his reign, gathered from these scattered references, in a sure chronological sequence. His life and reign have consequently been viewed in different lights by different scholars. The sketch given below is, therefore, tentative and has no claim to finality.

We know from the Rāshṭrakūṭa records that the Pratihāra king Vatsarāja defeated the king of Gauḍa, and was himself defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva, who later defeated the king of Gauḍa somewhere between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā.

The history of both Vatsarāja and Dhruva has been discussed elsewhere, in connection with the dynasties to which they belonged.[10] Both were ambitious and aggressive rulers who wanted to establish suzerainty over Northern India. It is evident that the king of Gauḍa also had the same design, and this brought these three powers into conflict which continued for several generations.

It would appear that Vatsarāja first took the aggressive and advanced towards the east. Where he met the king of Gauḍa it is difficult to determine. It has been held by some that Vatsarāja invaded

9. The chronology of the Pāla kings has been discussed in Appendix II of *HBR*, pp. 176 ff; and Appendix I, of *HABM*. pp. 161 ff.

10. For references to the statements concerning the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Pratihāras cf. Chs. XVI and XXII dealing respectively with these two dynasties.

Bengal and advanced as far as the mouth of the Gaṅgā,[11] but this is by no means certain. Vatsarāja, like Dhruva, may have encountered the king of Gauḍa in the Doab. But whatsoever that may be, Vatsarāja's triumph was short-lived. For he was defeated by Dhruva and forced to seek refuge 'in the trackless desert.' Dhruva next defeated the king of Gauḍa between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā.

This king of Gauḍa was almost certainly Dharmapāla, for his father Gopāla is not known to have advanced so far as the Doab in course of his conquests. But it is not also unlikely that Vatsarāja carried on an expedition against Bengal before Gopāla had succeeded in consolidating the kingdom. But whether it took place during the reign of Gopāla or Dharmapāla, the Pālas survived the Pratihāra invasion. Some time later, either before or after the defeat of Vatsarāja by Dhruva, Dharmapāla took the offensive and advanced as far as Allahabad and perhaps even beyond. He evidently followed in the footsteps of Śaśāṅka. But his triumphant career was checked by the reverse he sustained in the hands of Dhruva.

The departure of Dhruva for his own kingdom in the Deccan once more gave an opportunity to the Pālas and Pratihāras to try their strength. But the Pratihāras had evidently suffered more than the Pālas, and took longer to recover. In any event we hear nothing more of Vatsarāja. On the other hand Dharmapāla led many brilliant campaigns from one end of North India to another. First he acquired the sovereignty of Mahodaya or Kanauj by defeating Indrarāja and other kings, and placed his protégé Chakrāyudha on the throne.[12] He then undertook military campaigns in the course of which he proceeded as far as Kedāra, Gokarṇa, and the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the sea.[13] There is no doubt that Kedāra refers to the famous place of pilgrimage on the Himālayas in Garhwal. Dharmapāla therefore must have overrun the greater part of Northern India. Gokarṇa cannot be identified, but may be located in Nepal.[14]

11. The expressions used in epigraphic records merely mean that Vatsarāja defeated the lord of Gauḍa, but do not necessarily imply that he actually advanced as far as Bengal. According to a verse in the *Pṛithvīrāja-Vijaya* the sword of the Chāhamāna king Durlabharāja purified itself by a dip at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the sea and by the taste of the land of Gauḍa. It has been inferred from this verse that the feudatory chief Durlabharāja accompanied the expedition of Vatsarāja which overran the whole of Bengal and advanced as far as the mouth of the Gaṅga (*IHQ*, XIV, p. 844). But it is too important a conclusion to be based on merely a stray verse composed about four centuries after the events described.

12. Ins. no. 6, v. 3.

13. Ins. no. 2, v. 7.

14. Kielhorn identified Gokarṇa with a place of pilgrimage of that name in the Bombay State (*IA*, 1892, p. 257, n. 56). A more probable identification is with

According to a tradition preserved in the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* Dharmapāla occupied the throne of Nepal. Dharmapāla's effective suzerainty over a large part of Northern India is conclusively proved by verse 12 in the Khalimpur Copper-plate (no. 1) which describes a big imperial assembly or *durbar* held by him at Kanauj. The verse has been translated as follows:

> 'With a sign of his gracefully moved eyebrows he installed the illustrious king of Kānyakubja, who readily was accepted by the Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kīra kings, bowing down respectfully with their diadems trembling and for whom his own golden coronation jar was lifted up by the delighted elders of Pañchāla.'

In spite of some obscurity, owing to the defective construction of the last line of the verse, its general purport seems to be clear. A king was installed at Kānyakubja, by or with the permission of Dharmapāla, and the phrase 'own golden coronation jar' might imply that Dharmapāla was also already consecrated there, probably as emperor. This act (or acts) was (or were) formally approved by the rulers of the various countries named, whose 'bowing down' indicates that they acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla. The assembly at Kanauj, whatever might have been its avowed object, was undoubtedly meant to be a formal assumption of imperial authority by Dharmapāla. It was the crowning achievement of his life, and the fruit of a series of successful military expeditions all over Northern India. Some scholars do not seem to realise the full implication of this passage, and do not agree that the states named acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla.[15] But it is difficult to explain in any other way the presence of these distant chiefs in a political assembly at Kanauj, and their accepting, with bowed heads, the consecration of the king of Kanauj and probably also of Dharmapāla. The verse in the Khalim-

Gokarṇa in Nepal on the bank of the Bagmati, about 2 miles to the north-west of Paśupati (*IC*. IV, p. 266). A further identification will be referred to below (p. 665).

15 It is difficult to understand, far less accept, Tripathi's views on this point. He admits that 'the gathering of distant sovereigns' at Kanauj 'indicates the power and position of Dharmapāla who seems to have attained in his day the rank of the premier king of the North,' but denies that these sovereigns were conquered by, or even acknowledged the suzerainty of, Dharmapāla. 'The passage in question' he says (with reference to v. 12 of the Khalimpūr plate), 'only gives us a list of the principal kingdoms that had dealings with Kanauj, and the assumption that they were subject to it seems altogether fantastic and wide (*sic*) the mark' (***History of Kanauj***, pp. 216-17). In his opinion the sovereigns attended the assembly at Kanauj only 'to give respectfully their stamp of recognition to the settlement made by the Gauḍa monarch.' But it is difficult to understand why their recognition was necessary, and how, in that case, Dharmapāla may be regarded as the premier king of the North.

pur plate leaves no doubt that Dharmapāla claimed the position of a suzerain king in Northern India. Fortunately, we have independent evidence to prove that this claim was generally recognised. In the *Udayasundarīkathā*,[16] composed by the Gujarati poet Soḍḍhala in the eleventh century A.D., Dharmapāla is referred to as Uttarāpatha-svāmin or Lord of Uttarāpatha, which denotes the western half of Northern India. It has been suggested also that the expression Pañcha-Gauḍa, comprising, in addition to Gauḍa proper, Sārasvata (E. Panjab), Kānyakubja (Gangetic Doab), Mithilā (N. Bihar), and Utkala (Orissa), is reminiscent of the Gauḍa empire of Dharmapāla.[17]

We may form some idea of the extent of the empire from the verse quoted above. It would appear that Kanauj was an integral part, if not the seat, of the empire. We learn from the Bhagalpur Copper-plate (no. 6) that Dharmapāla conquered Kanauj by defeating Indrarāja and other enemies, and installed Chakrāyudha, an humble suppliant, as its king. The Pratihāra inscription also describes Chakrāyudha as a 'low or mean person who lived under the protection of another.' There is thus no doubt that although Kanauj had a separate king, he was a nominee of Dharmapāla, and to all intents and purposes, a subordinate ruler. It is very probable that the king who was installed at Kanauj in the presence of the rulers of Bhoja and other countries, as described in v. 12 of the Khalimpur Copper-plate, was no other than Chakrāyudha whose subservient position to Dharmapāla was thus proclaimed to, and accepted by, the assembled chiefs.

The direct political authority and control of Dharmapāla may thus be said to have extended from Bengal and Bihar (and probably also Nepal) at least as far as Kanauj. Beyond this lay the dominions of the chiefs who were either conquered, or acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla without any fight, and attended the assembly at Kanauj. Among these Gandhāra, Madra, Kuru and Kīra[18] (Kangra) practically cover the whole of Northern Panjab and, even beyond it, from Peshawar to Kangra. Matsya and Avanti comprise respectively the old Jaipur-cum-Alwar State and Malwa. Bhoja, Yadu and Yavana cannot be definitely located. The first probably refers to Berar and the last to some Muslim principality on the Sindhu or to the west of it. The Yadus or Yādavas are associated with Siṁhapura in the Panjab, as well as with Mathurā and Dvārakā. It is difficult to say which of these territories is meant. But in spite of some uncertainties there

16 *GOS*. Edition, pp. 4-6.

17 *HBR*, p. 14. The expression 'Pañcha-Gauḍa' occurs in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*. For its extent cf. *Skanda Purāṇa* quoted in *Sabda-kalpa-druma* (under 'Gauḍa').

18 The Kīras occupied the Kangra Valley (*IHQ*, IX, p. 11).

is no doubt that the empire of Dharmapāla extended from Bengal to the furthest limits of India in the north-west, and perhaps even beyond it, and as far as the Himālayas in the north. In the south it included Malwa and perhaps also Berar. These vast territories formally acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla, but retained their separate entities as states under their own rulers. It is interesting to note that most of these were situated in the region collectively known as Uttarāpatha, of which Dharmapāla is described as the lord in the Sanskrit work mentioned above.

There is no doubt that the victorious military expeditions of Dharmapāla were facilitated by the crushing defeat inflicted on Vatsarāja by Dhruva and the latter's return to the Deccan (*c.* A.D. 790) leaving the field free of Dharmapāla. As we have seen above (pp. 622 ff), Vatsarāja's son Nāgabhaṭa II retrieved the position of the Pratihāra family, and Dhruva's son Govinda III had to undertake a military expedition to chastise him, early in the ninth century A.D. The triumphant career of Dharmapāla may thus be placed approximately between A.D. 790 and 800.

Soon he had to encounter the formidable opposition of Nāgabhaṭa II, who had once more consolidated the power of the Pratihāras. Nāgabhaṭa first defeated Chakrāyudha, the protégé of Dharmapāla on the throne of Kānyakubja. Next, as could be easily foreseen, there was an encounter between Nāgabhaṭa and Dharmapāla. In a Pratihāra inscription Nāgabhaṭa is said to have inflicted a crushing defeat upon the mighty forces of the Lord of Vaṅga, and there are some indications that the Pratihāra army advanced into the heart of Dharmapāla's empire as far as Mudgagiri (Monghyr). This sudden collapse of the Pālas is difficult to explain and was perhaps caused by some unforeseen danger, such as the invasion of Bengal or Bihar by the Tibetan king, which is referred to in the Tibetan chronicles of Ladakh.[19] According to these chronicles the Tibetan king Khri-srong-lde-btsan (A.D. 755-97) 'subdued all the provinces on the four frontiers' including 'China in the east and India in the south'. According to another Tibetan text, composed about the ninth century A.D., his son Mu-tig Btsan-po ruled over a considerable part of India. The same text further informs us that two Indian kings, Dharm-dpal and Drahu-dpun, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Tibetan king and not only 'paid honour to his commands' but also paid punctually to him rich tributes including gems and all kinds of excellent provi

19 Francke, *Antiquities of Tibet*, Part II, p. 87; *IHQ*, XV, p. 65.

sions.[20] The name of the first Indian king almost certainly stands for Dharmapāla, but the assertion in the Tibetan text that he held his kingdom 'in subjection to Tibet' cannot be accepted as historical without corroborative evidence. It is, however, not improbable that the Tibetans invaded Eastern India towards the close of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century A.D. and obtained some successes for the time being. The Tibetan kings might have been provoked by the conquests of Dharmapāla in the Himālayan region. As noted above, there is a tradition that Dharmapāla conquered Nepal. It has been suggested by some scholars that Gokarṇa and the *Gaṅgā-sametāmbudhi*, conquered by him, are to be identified with Gokarṇa and Gaṅgāsāgara in Nepal, and, taken along with Kedāra, refer to a campaign of Dharmapāla along the foot of the Himālayas.[21]

The Tibetan kings, out of jealousy or fear, might have entered India through Nepal, as one or more of their predecessors had done before. And while Dharmapāla was busy fighting with them, Nāgabhaṭa II probably seized the opportunity to attack his hated rival from behind. Being thus seriously challenged on two fronts, Dharmapāla probably suffered severe reverses at the hands of both.

But whatever we might think of this imaginary reconstruction of events, there is no doubt that Nāgabhaṭa II obtained a signal triumph over his rival, and seemed to realise his father's dream of establishing a Pratihāra empire in Northern India. But once more fate was against the Pratihāras. The Rāshṭrakūṭa king Govinda III appeared in the North and shattered the imperial dreams of Nāgabhaṭa by inflicting a crushing defeat upon him. The Pratihāra kingdom lay prostrate under his feet, and he marched right across it to the Gaṅgā-Yamunā Doab, if not to the Himālayas, as mentioned in the Rāshṭrakūṭa records, which further state that Nāgabhaṭa 'in fear vanished nobody knew whither'.

According to the Rāshṭrakūṭa records, Dharma (i.e., Dharmapāla), and Chakrāyudha submitted to Govinda III of their own accord (p. 453). They had good reasons to do so as they were saved from imminent ruin by the timely interference of Govinda III. Indeed, the circumstances would even suggest or at least make it highly probable that they had invited the Rāshṭrakūṭa king to invade the dominions of Nāgabhaṭa in order to save themselves. But whatever might have been the cause or object of the northern invasion of Govinda III, it was Dharmapāla who benefited most by it. For Govinda III retired

20 F. W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents concerning Chinese Turkestan*, p. 270.

21 *IC*, IV, p. 266.

to the Deccan, and both he and his successor were too much involved in troubles there to interfere in North Indian politics. Nāgabhaṭa's power was destroyed and Dharmapāla was left free to exploit the political situation to his own advantage, as he had formerly done after the withdrawal of Dhruva from North India.

We have no definite knowledge of the political activities of Dharmapāla after this period. Some scholars are of opinion that Nāgabhaṭa II and his successors continued to hold Kanauj, but this does not rest on reliable evidence. On the whole the few incidents of the Pratihāra history of this period that we know, and the military expeditions of Dharmapāla's successor, Devapāla, alike indicate that there was no substantial diminution in the power of Dharmapāla during the last part of his reign, and hardly any recovery of power and strength by the Pratihāras till much later in the reign of Bhoja.[22] It is, of course, possible that some of the conquests of Dharmapāla, mentioned above, were effected during this period, but it is very likely that most of them were undertaken before the assembly at Kanauj which almost certainly preceded the struggle with Nāgabhaṭa. There is therefore no ground to disbelieve the statement in a Pāla record (no. 2, v. 12) that peace prevailed in the empire at the time of Dharmapāla's death.

Few kings can boast of achievements which stand undeniably to the credit of Dharmapāla. By his personal energy, valour and military genius he raised the weak kingdom of Bengal, lately torn by internal dissensions and foreign invasions, to the position of the premier and suzerain state in North India whose supremacy was acknowledged from Peshawar to the border of Assam. So great a change in the political status of Bengal in less than half a century looks almost like a miracle. Much of the credit is no doubt due to the spirit of sacrifice and wise statesmanship displayed by the chiefs of Bengal in electing Gopāla as their undisputed leader. But a great deal must also be ascribed to the towering personality and heroism of Dharmapāla.

Dharmapāla is given full imperial titles *Parameśvara*, *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja* in the Khalimpur Copper-plate where his father Gopāla is simply referred to as *Mahārājādhirāja*. The difference may be unintentional and accidental, or a deliberate indication of a change in status. There is, however, no doubt that Dharmapāla had fully earned the right to use the imperial titles which were henceforth used by the Pāla rulers. The Khalimpur Copper-plate gives a highly poetic account of his great popularity with all classes of people and the pomp and grandeur of his imperial court at Pāṭaliputra.[23]

22 The contrary view is maintained by Tripathi (*op. cit.*, pp 230 ff).

23 Cf. v. 13 and the prose passage immediately following it.

Dharmapāla was a devout Buddhist and a great patron of Buddhism. He is reputed to have founded the famous Vikramaśīla *Vihāra* in Magadha which soon rose to fame and distinction as a great centre of learning, only next in importance to Nālandā. It was so called because Dharmapāla had a second name or epithet *Vikramaśīla*. According to some accounts he also built a magnificent monastery at Odantapuri, though the credit for this is given by some to either his father or his son. The great Buddhist establishment at Pāhārpur (Bengal) which will be described later also owes its origin to him, though it was probably developed later by his successor. He was the patron of the great Buddhist writer Haribhadra, and, according to Tāranātha, founded fifty religious schools.[24]

Dharmapāla was thus a great hero both in war and peace. Of his personal life we know very little. He married Raṇṇādevī, the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Parabala. The identification of this ruler with the homonymous chief, who is known to have been ruling in Central India in A.D. 861, is rendered doubtful by the long interval in time. It is far more probable that Raṇṇādevī was connected with the well-known Rāshṭrakūṭa family of the Deccan. In any event we may presume that his relationship with the Rāshṭrakūṭas probably helped his political advancement, particularly in his struggle against the Pratihāras. Later inscription affirm that he owed his success in building up an empire largely to the military genius of his younger brother Vākpāla who commanded his army, and to the sage counsel of his Brāhmaṇa minister named Garga. As the achievements and fulsome praise of these two are recorded much later, and then only in the inscriptions of their descendants, there is undoubtedly a great deal of exaggeration in them.

According to Tāranātha Dharmapāla ruled for 64 years. But we have no record beyond his 32nd regnal year, the date of the Khalimpur Copper-plate. He may be assigned a reign of forty years from *c.* A.D. 770 to 810.

IV. DEVAPĀLA (*c.* A.D. 810-850)

Dharmapāla was succeeded by his son Devapāla born of his queen Raṇṇādevī. In the Khalimpur Copper-plate of Dharmapāla we have a reference to *yuvarāja* (heir-apparent) Tribhuvanapāla. It has been suggested that he assumed the name Devapāla on his accession. It is, however, more likely that prince Devaṭa, mentioned in the same grant refers to Devapāla. It is probable, therefore, that Tribhuvanapāla died

24 Tāranātha, transl. pp. 157, 206, 217; *HBR*. p. 115.

during the lifetime of his father, and hence his younger brother Devapāla ascended the throne.

Devapāla was a worthy son of a worthy father. He not only maintained intact the great empire left by his father but also increased its extent and enhanced its prestige. The details of the conquests of his reign are given in the records of the descendants of his general and ministers, and, naturally enough, the credit for the victories is largely given to them. These records were set up after the direct line of Devapāla was ousted from the throne by that of his general, and hence we must make due allowance for the natural exaggerations in reciting the achievements of the forefathers of the reigning king and of his minister, who had become powerful by that time.

The Bādal Pillar inscription (no. 8) contains the eulogy of a line of hereditary ministers of the Pālas. It begins with Garga, the minister of Dharmapāla. We are told that Garga took inordinate pride in the fact that although his master Dharmapāla was at first merely ruler of the east, he made him ultimately ruler of all the directions. Garga's son was Darbhapāṇi by whose diplomacy Devapāla made tributary the extensive territory lying between the Himālayas and the Vindhya, and the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The position of Darbhapāṇi was such that even the great emperor Devapāla had to wait humbly at his door awaiting his pleasure (lit. leisure).

Kedāramiśra, the grandson of Darbhapāṇi, was the next minister of the Gauḍa king, who is not named but was almost certainly Devapāla By following the wise counsel of this minister the king exterminated the Utkalas, destroyed the arrogance of the Hūṇas, and humbled the pride of the lords of Draviḍa and Gurjara.

Of Jayapāla, the general of Devapāla, it is said in another record (no. 6) that he enabled Devapāla to enjoy the dominion of the world by defeating the enemies of Dharma, evidently meaning Dharmapāla. In particular we are told that when, at the command of Devapāla, Jayapāla proceeded on a campaign of conquest, the ruler of Utkala fled from his kingdom merely on the report of his approach, and the king of Prāgjyotisha (Assam), who submitted without any fight, was allowed to rule as a vassal chief.

While we get so many details of conquests in the reign of Devapāla from the records of a slightly later age, two official inscriptions of the king (nos. 2-3) only make two vague general statements about them. First, it is said that his victorious army visited the Vindhya hills and the Kāmboja country, and next, that Devapāla ruled over the whole of India, from the Himālaya mountains to the Rāma's bridge (*Rāmeśvara-setubandha*) and from the eastern to the western ocean.

Leaving aside the question of apportioning the credit of these achievements between Devapāla on the one hand and his general and ministers on the other, we may now proceed to explain their full significance. It is clear that Devapāla continued the aggressive imperial policy of his father, and his reign witnessed a series of military campaigns. Two of these were directed against the neighbouring kingdoms of Assam and Orissa, and evidently attained complete success. Assam accepted the suzerainty of the Pāla king and the Pāla empire reached its natural limits on the east. The two different references to Utkala seem to indicate that it was incorporated in the Pāla dominions for the time being.

The Gurjaras no doubt refer to the Gurjara-Pratihāras, the sworn and eternal enemy of the Pālas. It has already been related how Nāgabhaṭa II, who defeated Dharmapāla, was himself disastrously defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Govinda III. Rāmabhadra, the son and successor of Nāgabhaṭa II, was a weakling, and the official records of the Pratihāras imply that during his reign the Pratihāra kingdom suffered an invasion from the Pālas (p. 630). Bhoja, the son of Rāmabhadra, at first attained some successes and was in possession of Kanauj and Kālañjara by A.D. 836. But his success was short-lived and he suffered a series of reverses between A.D. 850 and 860, if not earlier still (p. 632). Later, he regained his power and prestige and even successfully invaded Bengal, as has already been mentioned (p. 634).

It is a moot point whether Devapāla came into conflict with Rāmabhadra alone or also with Bhoja. At first it appears to be more plausible to accept the view that Devapāla defeated Rāmabhadra, but the accession of Bhoja turned the tide in favour of the Pratihāras and henceforth the Pāla empire was confined to its eastern dominions. According to this view, which is now generally held, the conquests of Devapāla up to Kāmboja, and his sway over territories up to the Arabian Sea, must all be dated prior to A.D. 836, when Bhoja had already established his authority in Kanauj, and the sun of Pāla glory had set.

But there is one very important consideration against this view. The defeat of the Lord of Gurjaras (and others) must have taken place in the latter part of Devapāla's reign, as the credit for this achievement is given to his minister Kedāramiśra, the grandson of his earlier minister Darbhapāṇi. It is, therefore, more likely that the various campaigns against the Draviḍas, Gurjaras, Hūṇas, and Utkalas should be referred to the fourth and fifth, rather than to the second and third decades of the ninth century A.D. As against the view, mentioned above, it may, therefore be argued, with equal plausibility, that Bhoja's aggressive campaigns brought him into conflict with Devapāla, and the defeat he sustained accounts for his discomfiture between A.D. 850

and 860. In other words, in spite of some initial success Bhoja suffered such reverses in the hands of Devapāla, that his power was eclipsed for a time, and the great Pāla king carried his victorious arms as far as Kāmboja and the Hūṇa country. And it was not till after Devapāla's death that Bhoja was again in a position to resume successfully his aggressive policy in the east. It may be mentioned, in support of this view, that even in an official record of Devapāla (no. 3), dated in the years 35 or 39, i.e., towards the very end of his reign, he is described as the ruler of the territory between the eastern and the western seas as in the earlier record dated in his 33rd year. It may be presumed therefore that his power or dominion did not suffer any substantial decline at the time of his death.

The history of the Pāla empire and our judgment of Devapāla's career would have to be considerably modified according as we take the one view or the other. But the available data do not enable us to arrive at a definite conclusion on this question which must therefore be left open. Reference may be made in this connection to a statement in a Tibetan chronicle that Ral-pa-can conquered India as far as the Gaṅgāsāgara which has been taken to mean the mouth of the Ganges.[25] Ral-pa-can's reign-period is not definitely known, but he was a contemporary of Devapāla. His claim of conquest, like the earlier ones mentioned above, is not supported by any Indian evidence. But if there is any truth in it, we get a satisfactory explanation for the initial success of Bhoja I. It would then appear that while Devapāla was busy fighting against the Tibetan invader, Bhoja seized the opportunity to strike a blow against him, and obtained some success. But as soon as Devapāla settled matters with the Tibetans, he was in a position to turn to his western enemy. It was probably in the course of this campaign that he not only humbled the arrogance of the lord of Gurjara but also defeated the Hūṇas and advanced as far as the Kāmboja country. Of course the possibility is not excluded that he had to carry on more than one campaign. According to this view Devapāla had a short spell of failure or bad luck intervening between two successful periods at the beginning and end of his reign. This reconstruction of his history is fully in keeping with what we know of his ministers. For while credit for great achievements is given to the first minister Darbhapāṇi and his grandson Kedaramiśra, the family record almost ignores Someśvara, the son of the former. It is, of course, just possible that Someśvara predeceased his father, or for other reasons never served as Devapāla's

25 Francke, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90. The reign-period of Ral-pa can is A.D. 804-16 according to Francke, and A.D. 817-36 according to Petech (*IHQ*, XV, p. 81).

minister. It is, however, equally likely that he occupied the hereditary post, but as the period during which he served as the minister of Devapāla was full of troubles and was one of ignominy rather than of glory, nothing was recorded about him except some vague general praise.

It is difficult to locate the territory of the Hūṇas who were defeated by Devapāla. The early history of this powerful tribe has been discussed above (pp. 223 ff). After the defeat and death of Mihirakula the Hūṇas ceased to be an important political factor, but they had different settlements in Central and Western India to which occasional reference is made in contemporary epigraphic and literary records (pp. 226 ff). According to the *Harsha-charita* there was a Hūṇa principality in Uttarāpatha near the Himalayas, i.e., in the Panjab or on its border (p. 234). It was probably this settlement of the Hūṇas which was successfully invaded by Devapāla. For it was not far from Kāmboja which was also invaded by him. It was probably in the course of one and the same campaign that Devapāla defeated both the Hūṇas and Kāmbojas. As these tribes lived almost on the outskirts of the Pāla empire, Devapāla's hostility towards them can be easily explained. These expeditions show that the campaigns and conquests of Dharmapāla, mentioned above, were not sporadic outbursts of military activity, far less mere productions of the court-poets' imagination, but a part of imperial policy deliberately pursued with eminent success, during two long and successive reigns. These military expeditions also prove the wide range of the imperial vision of the Pālas, and although the description of their empire as extending from the Himālayas to the Vindhya and from the sea to the sea may not be literally true, the exaggeration may be regarded as a pardonable one.

Even the wider limits of Devapāla's empire, extending up to the southern sea, as given in Devapāla's own records (nos. 2-3) may not be altogether without any basis of truth. For it appears that Devapāla took part in the politics of South India and came into conflict with the Pāndya kingdom which extended up to the southernmost limit of India. Any success against the Pāndya ruler by Devapāla might serve as a justification for the proud claim that his sway extended as far as the Rāmeśvara-Setubandha or Adam's Bridge. Although we have no direct evidence of such success its possibility is hinted at by several circumstances.

The earliest reference to the activities of the Pālas in the Far South has been traced in the Vélvikuḍi grant, dated about A.D. 769-70. We learn from it that an officer of the Pāṇḍya king, named Māraṅgāri, took part in a fight 'when Pūrvarājar (Eastern kings) rose up and put

to flight at Veṇbai the powerful Vallabha king on the occasion when the excellent daughter of Gaṅgarāja was secured and offered to Koṅgarkoṇ (evidently the Pāṇḍya king.)'[26] It has been suggested by H. C. Raychaudhuri[27] that the expression *Pūrvarājar* denotes the Pāla rulers of Eastern India, who are called *Pūrva-kshiti-dhara* in their records, together with their feudatories, and that the Vallabha refers to the Rāshṭrakūṭa Emperor Kṛishṇa I of the Deccan. From this Raychaudhuri concludes: 'The defeat of Kṛishṇa I at the hands of the Pālas and his failure to secure a Gaṅga princess for himself or for one of his sons, probably afford a clue to the well-known hostility of Kṛishṇa's progeny towards the Pālas and the Gaṅgas'. Raychaudhuri's suggestion would mean that Dharmapāla in collaboration with the Pāṇḍyas had achieved a victory against the Rāshṭrakūṭas at Veṇbai in South India. This would find some corroboration if we identify Gokarṇa, one of the places said to have been visited by the victorious army of Dharmapāla (pp. 654-55), with a place of that name in the Pudukkottai State, Madras.[28] But both the identifications on which the theory is based are extremely uncertain. Thus S. K. Aiyangar[29] takes *Pūrvarājar* to denote the Pallavas, and K. A. N. Sastri[30] identifies Vallabha with the Western Chālukya king Kīrtti-varman II. Besides, the known facts largely discount the possibility of a Pāla king in the sixties of the eighth century A.D being powerful enough to send his army so far south. There is, however, a more positive evidence of the Pālas taking an active interest in South Indian politics in the first half of the ninth century A.D. The genesis of this politics was the struggle between the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas. In particular we may note three great battles taking place between the two. In the first the Pallava king Nandi-varman III (p. 338) defeated the Pāṇḍya king Śrī-Māra Śrī-Vallabha (c. A. D. 815-62) some time about A.D. 830. In the second battle which took place a few years later at Kuḍamūkku (Kumbakonam), the Pāṇḍya king Śrī-Māra repulsed with great loss a confederation of Gaṅgas, Pallavas, Cholas, Kaliṅgas, Magadhas and others, led by Nandi-varman III. In the third battle Nṛipatuṅga, the successor of Nandi-varman III, defeated the Pāṇḍya king Śrī-Māra on the bank of the river Arichit, a branch of the Kāverī, which falls into the sea near Kāraikāl.[31]

Now the Magadhas, included among the confederate forces en-

26 *EI.* XVII. pp. 308-9.

27 *Aiyangar Commemoration Volume.* p. 197.

28 A. Appadorai, *Economic Conditions in Southern India*, I. p. 21.

29 Introduction to *Pallavas of Kāñchī* by R. Gopalan.

30 *The Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*, p. 58.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 73-75. See above, p. 339.

gaged in the second battle, can only refer to the Pālas who were the sole masters of this province in the first half of the ninth century A.D. By the conquest and perhaps annexation, of Utkala, the Pālas had become the neighbours of the Kaliṅgas, who formed another member of the confederacy. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the four powers ruling on the eastern sea-board of India, viz., the Pālas, the Kaliṅgas, the Pallavas, and the Cholas formed a political alliance and the federated forces took part in all the three battles fought against the Pāṇḍyas. The success in two of these battles, and perhaps in others, of which no record has yet come to light, against the Pāṇḍyas whose kingdom reached the southern limit of India, might have furnished the justification, in the eyes of the court-poets of the Pālas, for describing Devapāla's empire as extending up to Adam's Bridge.

Devapāla's expedition to the far south of India seems to be confirmed by an unexpected source. It is stated in a Chandella inscription[32] that Vijaya, one of the early kings, of this dynasty, proceeded on a career of conquest to the extreme south where Rāma built his bridge. In view of the position of the Chandellas at this time, it is evident that he could have done so only as a feudatory of some more powerful sovereign. It has accordingly been suggested that he was a vassal of the Pratihāra ruler Bhoja.[33] But we have no evidence that Bhoja ever undertook an expedition to the far south, and if we carefully consider the political geography of India about this time we must admit that it was well-nigh impossible for him to do so. It would be, therefore, more reasonable to assume that the Chandella ruler was a feudatory of Devapāla and accompanied him or his forces to the far south. It may be recalled in this connection that Vijaya's father Vākpati is said to have made the Vindhyas his pleasure-mount (*krīḍā-giri*), while Devapāla is also said to have visited the Vindhyas in the course of his victorious military campaign. Further, there is a tradition that the Chandellas supplanted the Parihārs in Bundelkhand. While some other details of the traditional account have proved to be correct, doubts have been expressed about this statement on the ground that it was unlikely that the Chandellas were sufficiently powerful, at the beginning of the ninth century, to drive away the Gurjara-Pratihāras.[34] But this difficulty disappears if we regard the Pālas as the suzerain of the Chandellas. We may hold that after defeating the Pratihāras they gave this region to the Chan-

32 *EI.* I, p. 142.
33 *DHNI,* II. pp. 670-71.
34 *Ibid.,* p. 667.

dellas. This would satisfactorily account for the Chandella tradition and Vijaya's expedition to the far south.

A further confirmation of Devapāla's expedition to the south is supplied by the explicit statement that he humbled the pride of the lord of Draviḍa. This expression is usually taken to refer to a Rāshṭrakūṭa king, and considering the eternal hostility between the two powers and the decline in the power of the Rāshṭrakūṭas under Amoghavarsha, the contemporary of Devapāla, the identification seems to be quite plausible. But the term *Draviḍa* denotes the South Indian Peninsula and not the region over which the Rāshṭrakūṭas ruled. It would be more reasonable, therefore, if in the light of the above discussion we identify the 'lord of Draviḍa,' defeated by Devapāla, as the Pāṇḍya king or some other ruler of the far south.

Whatever we might think of the various hypotheses mentioned above, about the course of political events, the fact that Devapāla's army took part in a fight against the Pāṇḍyas in the distant south is of great interest. No other ruler of Northern India, not even Aśoka or Samudra-gupta, is known to have sent a military expedition so far south till the days of Alāuddin Khilji, five centuries later. No wonder that the Pāla court-poets of the time viewed this unique achievement as something miraculous, and represented it as tantamount to exercising undisputed sway from the Himālayas to Adam's Bridge. It is, however, noteworthy that after the first flush of enthusiasm was over, the people and poets in Bengal took a more realistic view of the situation and, in a record of somewhat later date (no. 8), the Vindhyas are put as the southern boundary of Devapāla's empire.

In spite of the vagueness and obscurity of some details we may reasonably regard Devapāla as the most powerful potentate in Northern India during the first half of the ninth century A.D. He rounded off the Pāla empire in the east and south-east by the conquest of Assam and Orissa, and kept in check the Pratihāras, and possibly also the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The growing power of the former, specially the early success of Bhoja, was no doubt a great menace to the Pālas, but Devapāla proved more than a match for him and led his victorious forces as far as the Vindhyas in the south and the Indus in the west, inflicting defeat upon the wild border tribes like the Hūṇas and the Kāmbojas. He also probably felt powerful enough to take part in South Indian politics and joined the great confederacy of the political powers ruling on the eastern coast of India. Although the details of the activities of this confederacy are lacking, we may fairly guess that it involved wars with the Pāṇḍyas and possibly also with the Chālukyas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

Devapāla was thus a prominent figure in all-India politics. And his name and fame spread far beyond the boundaries of India. About this time there was a mighty empire of the Śailendras comprising Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java and many other islands in the Indian Archipelago (cf. Ch. XXXII). Its ruler Bālaputradeva, a devout Buddhist, built a monastery at Nālandā and, being desirous of endowing it, sent an ambassador to Devapāla asking for the grant of five villages for this purpose. Devapāla granted this request and made over the villages by a formal deed which still exists (no. 3). Nālandā was in those days a famous Buddhist seat of learning of international fame. Devapāla, himself a Buddhist, was a great patron of Buddhism and took deep interest in the affairs of the Nālandā University. This we know from an inscription (no. 4) which records that a citizen of distant Nagarahāra (modern Jalalabad), who was born in a Brāhmaṇa family but later became a learned Buddhist priest, received high honours from Devapāla and was appointed by him the head of the Nālandā monastery.

The available evidences thus leave no doubt that Devapāla extended the boundary of the Pāla empire and enhanced its power and prestige. As noted above, the Pāla empire was a closely knit political unit like the Maurya or the Gupta Empire. The provinces of Bengal and Bihar, which formed its nucleus, were administered directly by the Pālas, but the kingdom outside this limit were probably autonomous principalities acknowledging the suzerainty of the emperor. This not only follows from the fact that no inscription of the Pāla rulers, except one from Mirzapur, U.P. (pp. 672-73), has been found outside Bengal and Bihar, but it also hinted at even in the records of Devapāla. These contain a verse which refers to the conquests of Dharmapāla as follows:

> 'On the conclusion of his world conquest the captive princes, who being (now) released returned to their respective kingdoms after being made to forget all the grudge (they bore against him) by means of various marks of high distinction, remembered the good treatment accorded to them by the king and their hearts yearned for him out of affection as happens to those banished from heaven, remembering their past existence.'[35]

Bereft of poetic embellishments this verse means that the kings who were defeated by Dharmapāla were later reinstated in their dominions, and were on good terms with him. This last expression shows that they accepted with good grace their position as vassals. Their exact relationship with Dharmapāla cannot be determined, but

35 Ins. nos. 2 and 3, v. 8. V. R. S. Monograph No. 1. p. 26.

there is no doubt that they accepted his suzerainty. This follows from the epithet 'Lord of Āryāvarta' applied to Dharmapāla in a poetical work of the eleventh century A.D. and the description of the imperial assembly at Kanauj quoted above.

But although most of the conquered states were merely reduced to the position of autonomous vassal states, the kingdom of Kanauj seems to have had the status of a dependency whose subordination was more clearly pronounced in its relationship with the suzerain power. Dharmapāla probably got himself crowned as emperor at Kanauj and, in any case, certainly installed a new king on its throne, and held there an imperial assembly attended by the vassal chiefs. All these mark out Kanauj as having a closer relationship with the emperor than the other vassal states.

The position of Utkala, which roughly corresponded to Orissa, was also probably somewhat different. There are two distinct references to the conquest of this region by Devapāla. We learn from an official record (no. 6) of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla that on the approach of the Pāla general the king of Utkala fled from his kingdom. The other inscription (no. 8) informs us that the Utkalas were exterminated. In both these cases expressions have been deliberately used to indicate that the conquest of Utkala was more thorough-going in comparison with the other conquests mentioned along with it. It is thus not unlikely that Utkala was annexed to the Pāla empire and formed an integral part of it for some time.

We can thus easily reconstruct a picture of the Pāla empire at its greatest extent. Its nucleus, comprising the modern provinces of Bengal, Bihar and probably also Orissa, was directly administered by the Pāla emperors, and the Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) formed a close dependency. Beyond these limits were a large number of principalities in the Panjab, Eastern Rajasthan, Malwa and Berar which enjoyed internal autonomy, but acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pāla emperor and paid him homage and obedience, and probably also presents and tributes. It is not unlikely that Nepal also belonged to this category.

We get a good glimpse of the imperial vision of the Pālas from the grandiloquent description of their camps of victory at Pāṭaliputra and Mudgagiri (Monghyr) on the banks of the Gaṅgā, couched in identical terms in the official records of Dharmapāla and Devapāla:

> 'Now from his royal camp of victory, situated at Pāṭaliputra (or Mudgagiri), where the line of various boats, proceeding along the course of the Ganges, appears like a series of mountain tops that had been sunk to build a (second) Setubandha; where the

brightness of the day becomes darkened by the dense herd of rutting elephants and it seems as if the eternal rainy season has set in; where the sky becomes grey with the dust raised by the hard hoofs of innumerable horses which are brought as presents by many kings of the North; and where the Earth is bent low under the weight of the foot-soldiers of the numberless princes of Jambudvīpa (i.e., India) assembled to do homage to the Supreme lord (i.e., the king).'

In spite of the obvious exaggeration and somewhat conventional character of the above passage, which became stereotyped in the official Pāla records, it conveys an idea of the power and grandeur of the Pāla empire in the heyday of its glory.

A passing reference is made to the Pāla empire in an Arab chronicle written in the ninth century A.D. It refers to three great States in India viz., Balharā, Juzr, and Ruhmi (or Rahma). These three undoubtedly refer to the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the Gurjaras and the Pālas though the origin of the name Ruhmi cannot be satisfactorily explained.[36] According to the Arab account the Pāla king was at war with the two other powers which ruled over neighbouring kingdoms, but his troops were more numerous than those of his adversaries. When he went out to fight, his army included 50,000 elephants and ten to fifteen thousand camp followers only for fulling and washing cloths.

It is generally held that the above account was composed by an Arab traveller Sulaiman who visited India in or shortly before A.D. 851. But this view rests on insufficient evidence. The probability is that the chronicle was not the work of Sulaiman alone, but was really a compendium of different accounts written by various travellers at different times. The date of its compilation, though not known with certainty, may be taken as A.D. 851 or some time before it.[37]

On the whole we may regard the political condition of India, described in the Arab account, as true of the closing period of Devapāla's reign, possibly the decade A.D. 840-850, when the Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler Bhoja was trying to re-establish the fortunes of his family and came into conflict with both the Pālas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas. We have seen above that Devapāla had to fight with the Gurjaras, and probably also with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Thus the picture

36 For the account cf. *HIED*. I, pp. 5, 25. Hodivala suggests that Ruhmi was a misreading for Dharma, and that this was derived from Dharmapāla: the Arabic expression meaning the kingdom of Dharma (S. H. Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, pp. 4-5). For other suggestion cf. *IHQ*, XVI, p. 232.

37 S. M. H. Nainar, *Arab Geographers' Knowledge of Southern India*, pp. 8-12. K. A. N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices*, p. 22.

drawn in the Arab chronicle substantially agrees with what is known from epigraphic records, and the account supplies an independent corroboration of the greatness of the Pāla power about the middle of the ninth century A.D., i.e., almost to the very end of Devapāla's reign.

Devapāla, like his father, was a great patron of Buddhism. It is noteworthy that the foundation of famous monasteries of Vikramaśīla, Odantapurī and Somapura are attributed by some Tibetan writers to Dharmapāla, and by others to Devapāla. It is probable that like the Somapura (Paharpur) *vihāra*, which was undoubtedly founded by Dharmapāla, the other two were also begun by him but completed or embellished by Devapāla.

Devapāla had a long reign. The date of his Nālandā Copper-plate (no. 3) is generally read as 39 but is more probably 35. His reign may be said to cover the period from *c.* A.D. 810 to 850.

IV. VIGRAHAPĀLA AND NĀRĀYAṆAPĀLA

According to all the published official records of the Pālas Devapāla was succeeded by a ruler called Vigrahapāla. But in the Bādal Pillar inscription (no. 8) which gives a list of hereditary ministers and the kings they served, the name of the ruler after Devapāla is given as Śūrapāla. As the name of the next king in this list is Nārāyaṇapāla who, according to the official records succeeded Vigrahapāla, it has been generally assumed that Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla were two different names of one and the same king. The grounds for this assumption may be stated as follows.[38]

The Bhagalpur Copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla (no. 6) is the earliest official record, so far known, which traces the succession of the Pāla kings after Devapāla. It begins with Gopāla I (v.1) and, after mentioning Dharmapāla in two verses (vv. 2-3), devotes the whole of verse 4 to the eulogy of his younger brother Vākpāla whose victories 'made the kingdom of his elder brother free from enemies'. The next verse (v. 5) says that he had a son named Jayapāla who, by chastising the enemies of Dharma (i.e., Dharmapāla),[39] enabled his elder Devapāla to enjoy peacefully the blessings of sovereignty, Verse 6 refers to the conquest of Orissa and Assam by Jayapāla already mentioned, and verse 7 says that his son Vigrahapāla I became king.

38 For a full discussion, cf. *HABM*, pp. 170-71.

39 There is a play on the word dharma in *Dharma-dvishāṁ* which means enemy of Dharma, i.e., king Dharmapāla as well as persons who are opposed to *dharma* (virtue, righteousness), i.e., wicked and irreligious people.

Much confusion has been caused by the use of the pronoun 'he' and 'his' in the above verses. According to the rules of Sanskrit grammar such a pronoun refers to the noun immediately preceding it. Accordingly it was at first held that Jayapāla was the son of Vākpāla, and Vigrahapāla I was son of Jayapāla. Further, as Devapāla is refered to as *pūrvaja*, which usually, though not necessarily, means an elder brother, Devapāla, too, was the son of Vākpāla.

The discovery of Devapāla's own copper-plate grant (no. 2) showed the error of this view. For there he is distinctly said to be the son of Dharmapāla. Then the pendulum swung in the opposite direction. Some scholars held that both Jayapāla and Devapāla were sons of Dharmapāla, and Vigrahapāla was the son of Devapāla. The latter conclusion is based on the fact that the later Pāla records omit v. 6 and hence the expression 'his son' in v. 7 was taken to refer to Devapāla in the immediately preceding verse.

As regards the first point we must remember that *pūrvaja* only means *elder*, and there is nothing to show that Devapāla was an elder *brother* of Jayapāla. As regards the other, it is obvious that the later records merely repeated the genealogical verses of the earlier one, and the deliberate or accidental omission of a verse cannot be taken to modify the clear meaning of the original verses.

There is no doubt that Devapāla was the son of Dharmapāla. There seems to be equally little doubt that Jayapāla was the son of Vākpāla and Vigrahapāla I was the son of Jayapāla. For, apart from the clear juxtaposition of these names in the early and genuine version of the genealogical verses, we cannot satisfactorily explain the introduction of the names of Vākpāla and Jayapāla for the first time in a record of Nārāyaṇapāla, except on the supposition that the ruling king traced his descent from them. He evidently based his claim to the throne on the glorious (real or supposed) achievements of these illustrious predecessors rather than on his relationship to Devapāla.

So far as the identity of Śurapāla I and Vigrahapāla I is concerned the question has been set at rest by the recent discovery of a Copper-plate Grant[39a] by Śūrapāla expressly mentioned as the son of Devapāla and Bhavadevī, in the third year of his reign. Besides proving that Śūrapāla was different from Vigrahapāla I and was the last direct descendant of Dharmapāla, it is important on two other grounds. In the first place, it supplies the name of the queen of

39a The Mirzapur Grant of Śūrapāla. For a summary of its contents and its great historical importance, cf. (1) *Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology*, U.P. nos. 5-6, and (2) *JAS*, XIII (1971), pp. 201 ff.

Devapāla, Bhavadevī, the daughter of king Durlabharāja, presumably, the Chāhamāna king of the same name who is referred to in the *Pṛithvīrājavijaya* as 'having his sword purified by a dip at the confluence of the Ganges and the sea, and by the taste of the land of Gauḍa.'[39b] Secondly, it is the earliest Pāla record found outside the boundaries of Bengal and Bihar. The Grant also refers to the conquests of Śūrapāla, though no details are known so far, as the Grant has not yet been properly edited. But in any case, it proves that the Pāla Empire extended to Uttar Pradesh even for some time after the death of Devapāla. Śurapāla I probably ruled from A.D. 850 to 853.

The circumstances under which the empire passed on to a collateral branch of the dynasty are yet unknown. We know from an inscription of Devapāla that he had a grown-up son whom he had installed as *yuvaraja* or heir-apparent.[39c] It is not, of course, beyond the range of possibility that this son died before his father and the other son Śūrapāla succeeded his father; further, that neither Śurapāla I nor his brother or brothers left any male issue to succeed him, and consequently Vigrahapāla I, ascended the throne as the next of kin. But it is equally, perhaps even more, likely that Jayapāla, taking advantage of his position as commander of the royal forces, placed his own son on the throne in supersession of the claims of the legitimate heir, or by ousting him. There is no direct evidence of such a palace revolution, but it satisfactorily explains the sudden decline in the power of the Pālas and the collapse of the empire that followed in a few years' time.

The official records do not credit Vigrahapāla I with any victory. It is significant to note that the same Kedāramiśra to whom the inscription no. 8 gives the credit for most of the victories of Devapāla's reign also served as the minister of Śūrapāla, but no reference is made to Vigrahapāla I though his son was served by a member of this family as minister. King Vigrahapāla I was evidently of a religious disposition. As we know from another record (no. 6), he abdicated the throne in favour of his son Nārāyaṇapāla and retired to the forest to practise austerities. Two of his inscriptions are dated in his third and fifth regnal years and it does not appear that he reigned for a much longer period. His reign-period probably falls between A.D. 853 and 858.

Nārāyaṇapāla, the son and successor of Vigrahapāla I, seems to have taken after his father rather than his illustrious predecessors.

39b *HABM*, p. 175, fn. 34.

39c According to ins. No. 2, Devapāla made his own son, *yuvarāja* Rājyapāla, the Dūtaka of the grant.

He had a long reign of not less than 54 years (no. 7). His official record (no. 6) only bestows vague general praises upon him, but credits him with no victory. His minister Guravamiśra, the son of Kedāramiśra, and the last of a long series of illustrious hereditary counsellors of State, commemorated the achievements of his forefathers on a Garuḍa pillar erected by him (no. 8), but does not state anything about him.

The long inglorious reign of Nārāyaṇapāla, extending from c. A.D. 854 to 908, saw the complete collapse of the political power of the Pālas. We cannot trace the stages by which it was brought about but we can easily identify the chief enemies of the Pālas.

The first challenge to the Pāla authority seems to have come from the newly conquered territories in the east. King Harjara of Kāmarūpa (Assam)[40] assumed imperial titles and is said to have achieved many victories. It is evident that he had thrown off the yoke of the Pālas. But it is difficult to ascertain when this was done. One of the known dates of Harjara is year 510 of the Gupta Era, i.e. A.D. 829-30. But the copper-plate grant which gives him the imperial titles was issued by his son, the crown-prince. Most probably Harjara was then too old to take an active part in the administration and as such the grant might be even later than A.D. 850.

Similarly the Kara kings of Orissa also assumed imperial titles during the reign of Śivakaradeva, the fourth king of the dynasty. Although his date is not exactly known, he may be assumed to have ruled about the middle of the ninth century A.D.

It is difficult to say whether Assam and Orissa broke off from the Pāla empire and assumed independent status during the closing years of Devapāla's reign or shortly after. The latter is more probable for, as we have seen above, Devapāla conquered Utkala perhaps in the latter part of his reign.

According to a Rāshṭrakūṭa record, dated A.D. 866, the ruler or rulers of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha paid homage to king Amoghavarsha. This king had a long reign extending from A.D. 814 to 880, but the internal events of this reign make it unlikely that he was in a position to send an expedition to Bengal before he had defeated the king of Veṅgī some time about A.D. 860. It is likely, therefore, that shortly after this campaign, the Rāshṭrakūṭa army proceeded along the Orissa coast and attacked the Pāla kingdom from the south. The Sulki king *Mahārājādhirāja* Raṇastambha of Orissa, who claims to have conquered Rāḍha (W. Bengal), perhaps accompanied this

40 The detailed history of the kings of other dynasties mentioned in this section, with full references, has been given in the chapters dealing with them.

expedition. The Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion was probably nothing more than a military raid, and left no permanent effect. But it is not unlikely, that it encouraged, if it did not directly help, the defection of the Karas of Orissa. There is, however, no doubt that all these events were both causes and effects of the weakness of the Pālas which facilitated the more serious invasion by the other enemy, viz., the Pratihāras from the west.

As already noted, the Pratihāra king Bhoja obtained some success at the beginning of his reign and conquered Kanauj. But Devapāla re-established the supremacy of the Pālas in Northern India. It was not till after his death that Bhoja was once more in a position to challenge the authority of the Pālas. The unwarlike disposition of Vigrahapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, the invasion of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and possibly also internal dissensions in the Pāla kingdom, gave Bhoja the requisite opportunity. He organised a great confederacy against the Pālas, as noted above (p. 634), and not only conquered Magadha but even a part, if not the whole, of North Bengal. This is definitely proved by a large number of inscriptions of Mahendrapāla in Bihar and North Bengal. There can be hardly any doubt that this Mahendrapāla is identical with the Pratihāra emperor of that name, who succeeded Bhoja.

Two inscriptions of Nārāyaṇapāla (nos. 6, 7) prove that he was ruling over Magadha in the years 17 and 54 of his reign. We may therefore hold that the Pratihāras occupied the Pāla territories in Bihar and North Bengal during this interval i.e., some time after A.D. 870, but Nārāyanapāla recovered them before *c.* A.D. 908. This is indirectly confirmed by the fact that the known inscriptions of the Pratihāras in Bengal and Bihar range between years 2 and 9 or 19 of Mahendrapāla, i.e., between *c.* A.D. 887 and 894 or 904.

The recovery of his paternal dominions by Nārāyaṇapāla was undoubtedly facilitated by the weakness of the Pratihāras, at the beginning of the tenth century A.D., which culminated in a complete, though temporary, collapse of the Pratihāra empire in A.D. 915. It may be noted in this connection that Nārāyaṇapāla's mother, Lajjādevī, was a Kalachuri princess (no. 6, vv. 9-10) probably of Kokkalla's family. But whether Nārāyaṇapāla obtained any help from his powerful relations in recovering his kingdom, it is difficult to say.

Towards the close of his reign Nārāyaṇapāla again came into conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Their king Kṛishṇa II (A.D. 880-914) claims that he was the 'preceptor charging the Gauḍas with the vow of humility' and that 'his command was obeyed by Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Gaṅga and Magadha'. This vainglorious statement perhaps means nothing more than a military raid in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, but

it is difficult to estimate the amount of success that attended it. It is interesting to note that Rājyapāla, the son of Nārāyaṇapāla, married Bhāgyadevī, the daughter of Tuṅga, 'the moon in the family of the Rāshṭrakūṭas' (no. 10, v. 8). If, as seems probable, this Tuṅga is the abbreviated form of the name of Jagattuṅga, son of Krishṇa II, we may assume that this marriage alliance marked the end of hostilities between the two. As already noted (p. 641) it was an invasion of the Rāshṭrakūṭas that led to the collapse of the Pratihāra empire in A.D. 915, and it is not unlikely that Nārāyaṇapāla was helped by his Rāshṭrakūṭa relations in recovering his dominions from the Pratihāras.

In any event the long reign of Nārāyaṇapāla is an important chapter in the history of the Pālas. They lost their imperial authority and prestige, and at one time even their very existence was threatened. But fortunately Nārāyaṇapāla was able to recover the home province of Bengal and Bihar before his death, which took place about A.D. 912.

5. THE SUCCESSORS OF NĀRĀYAṆAPĀLA

Nārāyaṇapāla was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla who ruled for at least 32 years (*c.* A.D. 912 to 944, insc. no. 9). The official records merely credit him with the excavation of large tanks 'deep as the sea', and the construction of big temples 'high as the mountain'. His son by the Rāshṭrakūṭa princess Bhāgyadevī, named Gopāla II, succeeded him and ruled for no less than 17 years (*c.* A.D. 944-61)[41] Nothing is known of him or of his son and successor Vigrahapāla II (*c.* A.D. 961-88).[42]

The period of about seventy-five to eighty years covered by these three reigns witnessed a great change in the political condition of Northern India. The Pratihāra empire broke up into a number of independent principalities, some of which made a bold bid for political supremacy of Northern India. The chief among these were the Chandellas and the Kalachuris, who naturally turned their cove-

41 The regnal year 17 of Gopāla is found in a palm-leaf Manuscript of the *Maitreya Vyākaraṇa*. This king Gopāla has been unanimously taken to be Gopāla II. H.P. Sastri read the year as 57 (*Descriptive Cat. of Sanskrit Ms.* I, p. 13) and is supported by others (*IHQ*, VI, p. 152). But R. D. Banerji and D. R. Bhandarkar read the date respectively as 17 and 11 (*JBORS*, XIV, pp. 490-91). The first figure seems undoubtedly to be 1 but the second is doubtful.

42 A Ms. of *Pañcharakshā* was copied in the year 26 of Vigrahapāla, who may be either the second or the third king of this name. He is, however, usually identified with Vigrahapāla II. The same uncertainty prevails regarding king Vigrahapāla mentioned in a Kurkihar Image inscription, dated year 19 (*JBORS*, XXVI, pp. 37, 240).

tous eyes towards the rich and fertile plains of Bengal and Bihar.

Thus even the passing away of the empire of their eternal enemies, the Pratihāras, gave no respite to the Pālas for they had to bear the brunt of the aggressive imperialism of the two new powers. The detailed history of these has been given in ch. XXVI. It will suffice to state here that the Chandella king Yaśovarman claimed to have cut down the Gauḍas like creepers, while his son Dhaṅga boasted of having imprisoned the queens of Rāḍha and Aṅga, i.e., North Bengal and East Bihar. We need not take these statements to be literally true, but it appears very probable that Bengal and Bihar were harassed by the invasions of both Yaśovarman and his son Dhaṅga, whose long reign covered nearly the whole of the second half of the tenth century A.D.

The Kalachuri records also refer to successful military expeditions of Yuvarāja I against Gauda, and of his son Lakshmaṇarāja against Vaṅgāla, i.e., southern and eastern Bengal. These two kings ruled in the second and third quarters of the tenth century A.D. As noted above, the Telugu Choḍa King Bhīma (A.D. 973-99) claims to have overrun western and northern parts of Bengal.

These foreign invasions must have considerably weakened the three successors of Nārāyaṇapāla whose rule covered the period from about A.D. 912 to 988. Gradually there was a complete disruption of the Pāla kingdom. This is broadly hinted at by the specific reference in foreign records to the constituent parts of the Pāla kingdom like Aṅga, Magadha, Gauḍa, Rādha and Vaṅgāla. Although such references do not necessarily imply that they were all independent principalities, we have positive evidence to show that there were at least three distinct political units in Bengal and Bihar about this time.

An inscription (no. 11, v. 12) of Mahīpāla, son of Vigrahapāla II, informs us that he recovered the paternal territory which had been usurped by others. This shows that the Pālas lost Bengal, or at least considerable portions of it, during the reign of Vigrahapāla II, or immediately after its end. There is no doubt that these usurpers belonged to the Kāmboja family (or clan), for we have two records of these rulers, one in North and the other in West Bengal. An inscription (no 12) engraved on a pillar, now at Dinajpur, but probably brought from the neighbouring ruins at Bāngarh, in North Bengal, refers to a Gauda king of Kāmboja family, and according to some scholars it contains the date 888 Ś (A.D. 966). A copper-plate grant (no. 13) found at Irda, records grants of lands in Daṇḍa-bhukti-maṇḍala of Vardhamāna-*bhukti* (Burdwan division) by Navapāla in his 13th regnal year. This king succeeded his elder brother Nārāyaṇapāla and was the son of Rājyapala and Bhāgyadevī. Rājyapāla is said to have been the

ornament of the Kāmboja family, and full imperial titles are given both to him and to Nayapāla. The grant was issued from the capital city called Priyaṅgu which has not yet been identified.

As we have seen, the son and successor of Nārāyaṇapāla was called Rājyapāla and his queen was named Bhāgyadevī. The agreement of these two names has led some scholars to identify the Rājyapāla of the Irda copper-plate with the Pāla ruler of the same name. But then it is difficult to account for the epithet 'ornament of the Kāmboja family' applied to him. It has been suggested that he owed the designation to his mother's lineage. But this is by no means certain, and the question must be left open.[43]

But whether or not the two Rājyapālas are identical, the Irda Copper-plate leaves no doubt that there was an independent kingdom in West Bengal under a family called Kāmboja, which might or might not have been related to the Pāla rulers. The Kāmboja king mentioned in the Dinajpur Pillar inscription (no. 11) also probably belonged to the same family which thus ruled over both North and West Bengal.

If we do not identify the two Rājyapālas, we have to assume that these rulers belonged to the Kāmboja tribe which has been known from time immemorial to have lived in the North-West Frontier. The great distance of this region from Bengal has induced some scholars to locate the Kāmbojas, who invaded and conquered Bengal, either in Tibet or in Lushai Hills tracts lying between Burma and Bengal.[44]

It is not, however, necessary to suppose that there was a regular military conquest of Bengal by the Kāmbojas. It is more likely that a high dignitary or military officer of the Kāmboja tribe in the service of the Pālas grew very powerful and took advantage of the weakness of the Pālas to carve out an independent principality. We know that Devapāla defeated the Kāmbojas and brought horses for his army from their country (no. 2, v. 13). It is not unlikely that cavalry officers were also recruited from that region, and one of them made himself master of North and West Bengal.[45]

The problem is further complicated by an inscription found at Bhaturiya.[46] It refers to a king named Rājyapāla whose command was obeyed by the Mlechchhas, Aṅgas, Kaliṅgas, Vaṅgas, Oḍras, Pāṇḍyas, Karṇāṭas, Lāṭas, Suhmas, Kṛitas and Chīnas. It is very likely

43 For a full discussion of this problem, cf. *HBR*, p. 190, *HABM*, pp. 126-29.

44 *Ibid.*

45 *EI*, XXII, pp. 150 ff; XXIV, 43 ff. Some scholars have suggested that the Kāmbojas might have come to Bengal along with the Pratihāras when they invaded this province (*DHNI*, I, p. 311; *IHQ*, XV, p. 511).

46 *EI*, XXXIII, p. 150. *HABM*, pp. 127-29.

that this king Rājyapāla is identical with the Rājyapāla of the Irda Grant mentioned above. It is difficult to believe that he conquered, on his own account, all the countries mentioned in the record, and, curiously enough, the long list includes three well-known regions in Bengal itself, namely, Aṅga, Vaṅga and Suhma.

In any case there is no doubt that the main Pāla Dynasty lost control over both East and South Bengal, for we have other and more definite epigraphic evidence of the existence of independent rulers in these regions. The earliest is a ruling dynasty with its capital at Devaparvata, a hill-fort in the Mainamati Hills near Comilla in Bangladesh one of whose members, Bhavadeva, assumed the imperial titles *Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, and Mahārājādhirāja*.[47]

The next in point of time seems to be Mahārājādhirāja Kāntideva ruling in Harikela with his capital probably at Vardhamānapura.[48] Harikela generally denoted East Bengal, though sometimes it was used in a more extended sense so as to include Southern, and probably also a part of Western Bengal, and sometimes in a more restricted sense, when it embraced the region round Sylhet.[49] It is therefore difficult to form an idea of the power of Kāntideva or the extent of his kingdom.

The existence of a very powerful dynasty of seven kings, with names ending in *Chandra*, ruling in East and South Bengal, is proved by thirteen inscriptions. They probably ruled between A.D. 875 and 1035, the last of whom, Govindachandra, is referred to in the Chola records as the ruler of Vaṅgāla who fought with the invading army of Rājendra Chola and fled from the battle-field.[50]

It will thus appear that the Pāla rulers lost hold over Bengal in the tenth century A.D. and their rule was evidently confined to Magadha All the records of Rājyapāla, Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II have been found within the limits of Bihar except a solitary copper-plate of Gopāla II (no. 10) which makes a grant of land in Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*, i.e., North Bengal in the sixth year of his reign. There is no record of any Pāla king in Bengal after this till we come to the reign of Mahīpāla I, the son and successor of Vigrahapāla II. About the time when he ascended the throne, the Kāmbojas were ruling in North and West Bengal and the Chandras in East and probably also in South Bengal. The Pālas, who lost their *janaka-bhū* or native land, were ruling over Aṅga and Magadha, and even here they were exposed to the invasions of the Chandella Dhaṅga.

47 *JASL*, XVII (1951), p. 83.
48 Chittagong C.P. of Kāntideva (*EI*, XXVI, p. 313).
49 *HABM*, p. 9.
50 For a full discussion, cf. *HABM*, pp. 199-206.

APPENDIX

List of Important Pāla Inscriptions:

1. Khalimpur C-p. of Dharmapāla year 32 (*EI*, IV, p. 243).
2. Monghyr C-p. of Devapāla year 33 (*EI*, XVIII, p. 304).
3. Nālandā C-p. of Devapāla, year 39 (*EI*, XVII, p. 318); Monograph no. I of Varendra Research Society; *JRASBL*, VI, p. 215 (where the date has been read as 35).
4. Ghoshrawa Stone Ins. of Devapāla (*IA*, XVII, p. 307).
5. Bihar Buddha Image Ins. of Vigrahapāla I or Śūrapāla, year 3 (*JASB*, N. S. IV, p. 108; *JRASBL*, IV, p. 390).
6. Bhagalpur C-p. of Nārāyaṇapāla, year 17 (*IA* XLVII, p. 110).
7. Bihar Image Ins. of Nārāyaṇapāla, year 54 (*IA*, XLVII, p. 110).
8. Bādal Pillar Ins. (*EI*, II, p. 160).
9. Kurkihar Image Ins. of Rājyapāla, year 32 (*JBORS*, XXVI, p. 246).
10. Jajilpara C-p. of Gopāla II, year 6 (*Bhāratavarsha*, a Bengali journal, 1344 B. S., Part I, p. 264).
11. Bāngaḍh Grant of Mahīpāla I, year 9 (*EI*, XIV, p. 324).
12. Dinajpur Pillar Ins., (*JASB*, N. S., VII, p. 619).
13. Irda C-p. of Kāmboja king Nayapāla, year 13, (*EI*, XXII, p. 150; XXIV, p. 43)

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THE MINOR FEUDATORIES

DURING THE PERIOD when the Pratihāras, Pālas, and Rāshṭrakūṭas were playing the dominant political role, a large number of minor States flourished in different parts of Northern India. To begin with, they were of no great political importance and were feudatories of one or the other of the three big powers. But as these powers declined, the minor States gradually rose to power and importance. Three of them, viz., the Kalachuris, the Chandellas, and the Paramāras played the dominant role in North Indian politics in the latter half of the tenth century, and made a bold bid for gaining the position which their suzerains had lost. A few other States rose to great power and fame under the generic name of 'Rājputs' in the later history of India. It would be convenient to treat the history of these two categories of States in separate chapters. The remaining States, which never rose to high distinction, but were of sufficient local importance, may be briefly discussed here. Some of the ruling clans began their career during the period under review, but as they did not attain power and distinction till the eleventh century A.D., their history will be dealt with in the next volume. An instance is furnished by the Chandras of Eastern Bengal to whom brief reference has been made in the preceding Chapter.

I. THE DYNASTIES OF SAURĀSHTRA

1. *The Saindhavas*

When the political power of the Maitrakas of Valabhī began to decline in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D., a number of ruling families rose to prominence in Saurāshṭra, modern Kāthiāwār. One of them was known as the Saindhava.

The Saindhavas[1] claim their descent from the Epic hero Jayadratha. They ruled the western Saurāshṭra-maṇḍala[2] from their capital Bhūtāmbilikā, also called Bhūmilikā (modern Bhumili or Ghumli in the old Nawanagar State of Kāthiāwār, 25 miles north-east of Porban-

1 The history of the Saindhavas is mainly based on six copper-plates. (*EI*, XXVI, pp 185 ff).

2 *Apara-Saurāshṭra-maṇḍala.*

dar, in a gorge of the Bardā hills). The earliest known chief of the family was the *Mahārāja* Ahivarman, whose son was the *Maharajā* and *Mahāsenāpati* Pushyeṇa.[3] They flourished either in the sixth or in the seventh century A.D. The next known king of the dynasty is Pushyadeva, who flourished in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D. Some are inclined to identify Pushyadeva with Pushyeṇa, but this goes against the evidence of palaeography. As noted above (p. 615), the country of the Saindhavas was invaded by the Arabs of Sindh some time before A.D. 739. It was probably Pushyadeva who suffered defeat at the hands of those invaders. Dantidurga, the founder of the Rāshṭrakūṭa sovereignty in the Deccan, is said to have won victory over the Saindhavas in the middle of the eighth century A.D.[4] His adversary was either Pushyadeva or his successor. Pushyadeva and his successors claim to have been the lords of western sea.[5]

Pushyadeva was succeeded by his son *Mahāsāmanta* Kṛishṇarāja I, whose son and successor was *Mahāsāmanta* Agguka I. Kṛishṇarāja and Agguka may be taken to have flourished respectively in the third and fourth quarters of the eighth century A.D. The Arabs of Sindh renewed their operations against Saurāshṭra during the reigns of these two kings.[6] About A.D. 756 Hisham was appointed governor of Sindh. He sent 'Amrū bin Jamāl with a fleet of barks to the coast of Barada' which is presumably the tract of country adjacent to Bardā Hills. The invasion seems to have proved abortive, and twenty years later another naval expedition was sent against Barada. The Muslim sources relate that on that occasion the Arabs succeeded in capturing a town, but had ultimately to withdraw as an epidemic broke out in the army and carried away a large number of their men. After this disaster the Caliph Mahdi gave up the project of conquering any part of India. A Saindhava inscription relates that Agguka I 'showed the greatness of Varāha when he easily rescued his country which was being drowned in an ocean of naval force sent by powerful enemies'. These enemies were obviously the Arabs, who occupied the Saindhava country in A.D. 776. It appears from the above statement that Agguka succeeded in defeating the Arabs and in rescuing the country from their grip. Thus the loss of a large number of Arab army, due to the outbreak of an epidemic, was not perhaps the sole cause which forced the Arabs to leave the shore of Saurāshṭra.

3 *IA*, XXXVIII, p. 145.
4 *ASWI*, V, p. 186.
5 *Apara-samudrādhipati*.
6 *HIED*, I, p. 444.

Kṛishṇa I and Agguka I were feudatory chiefs, but the name of their overlord is not known. Agguka I was succeeded by his son *Mahāsāmanta* Rāṇaka,[7] who may be placed in the first quarter of the ninth century A.D. The Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II (*c.* A.D. 800-33) is said to have defeated the Saindhavas (p. 623) and his adversary may have been Rāṇaka. As during this period the empire of the Pratihāras of Kanauj extended at least up to the old Junāgaḍh State, Kāthiāwār, it is not unlikely that western Kāthiāwār also formed a part of it, and Rāṇaka and his successors owed allegiance to them. Rāṇaka had by his two queens two sons Kṛishṇarāja II and Jāīka I. He was succeeded by Kṛishṇarāja II, who may be taken to have flourished in the second quarter of the ninth century A.D. From the reign of Kṛishṇarāja II the Saindhavas entered into a long-drawn struggle with the Chāpas of Vardhamānā, modern Vadhwan, in Kāthiāwār. Kṛishṇarāja II, who is referred to as a king (*rājā*), won a victory over the Chāpas, who at that time were probably ruled by Vikramārka. Some Saindhava inscriptions mention that Kṛishṇarāja II propitiated Rāma like Bharata, ridiculed Duryodhana, drank the blood of Duḥśāsana like Bhīma, and pleased the mountainous people like Śaṅkara. Some are inclined to think that the Rāma, referred to, was the Pratihāra Rāmabhadra of Kanauj, and Duryodhana and Duḥśāsana might have been some real historical figures. This suggestion does not deserve any consideration in view of the fact that some of the successors of Kṛishṇarāja II are compared with Rāma, Bhīma, and Śaṅkara, in the same way Kṛishṇarāja II was succeeded by his infant son Agguka II, and Kṛishṇarāja's step-brother Jāīka I acted as a regent. During the regency Jāīka I assumed the title *Mahāsāmanta*. In A.D. 832 he granted a charter, which was written by Kapila, son of Vikkaṭa, of the Śaka family, a very interesting reminiscence of the old Śaka rule in this region. He professes through this inscription that 'though Kamalā (Goddess of Royal Fortune) was anxious to be united to him in preference to Agguka, her rightful lord, he spurned her wily overtures and decided to be the disinterested guardian of his young and inexperienced nephew'. But Jāīka issued another inscription which does not mention the names of Kṛishṇarāja II and Agguka II. It is not, therefore, unlikely that in the latter part of his life he overthrew his nephew and occupied the throne. He also fought with the Chāpas of Vardhamāna. He had two sons Chāmuṇḍarāja and Agguka III, and seems to have been succeeded by the former who also is credited with a victory over the

7 Altekar takes this Rāṇaka as a successor of Agguka II (*EI*, XXVI, p. 207). In my opinion he is identical with Rāṇaka, son of Agguka I.

Chāpas. Chāmuṇḍarāja was succeeded, or probably supplanted, by his brother *Mahāsāmanta* Agguka III, who also came into conflict with the Chāpas. After a long reign he is said to have 'decided to crown his son himself, noticing how Lakshmī, the goddess of Royal Fortune, had become eager to be united with his son Rāṇaka, who had become quite capable of bearing the burden of administration'. It is thus evident that he abdicted in favour of his son Rāṇaka II. *Mahāsāmanta* Rāṇaka II issued a land-grant in A.D. 874, the executor of which is the *yuvarāja* Jāīka. Jāīka is not known to have ever ruled. and some time before A.D. 886 the throne of Bhūtāmbilikā passed into the hands of Agguka IV, son of Chāmuṇḍarāja. Agguka IV was succeeded by his son Jāīka II, two of whose known dates are A.D. 904 and 915.[8] Names of the successors of Jāīka, if any, are not known The dynasty was probably overthrown by the Ābhīra Graharipu.

2. *The Chālukyas*

A Chālukya dynasty[9] is known to have ruled in Saurāshtra contemporaneously with the Saindhavas. The territory over which this dynasty ruled cannot be definitely fixed, but comprised a part or whole of 'Junāgadh State', as the inscriptions of this dynasty have been found in the town of Una in that area. The earliest known king (*mahā-mahīpati*) of the dynasty is Kalla, who flourished in the third quarter of the eighth century A.D. He was succeeded by his brother Mahalla, who is also described as a great king (*mahā-mahīpati*). Mahalla was succeeded by Kalla's son, whose name seems to have been Rājendra. The successor of the latter was his son Bāhukadhavala, who flourished in the first half of the ninth century A.D. Bāhukadhavala seems to have yielded to the force of the Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II of Kanauj, when the latter invaded Saurāshṭra, for his successors owed allegiance to the Pratihāras. It is very likely that the Chālukyas of Saurāshṭra served the Pratihāras as vassals from the time of Bāhukadhavala. It is stated that Bāhukadhavala defeated in battle Dharma and a Karṇāṭa army, and also conquered kings who are well known *rājādhirāja-parameśvaras* (kings of kings, the great lords). This evidently means that Bāhukadhavala took part in Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II's military campaigns, specially against Dharmapāla of Bengal and the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III of Karṇāta. Bāhukadhavala was succeeded by his son Avanivarman I. Avanivarman I's son and suc-

8 *IA*, II, p. 259.

9 The history of this branch is mainly based on the Una grants, *EI*, IX, pp. 1 ff.

cessor, *Mahāsāmanta* Balavarman, was a feudatory of the Pratihāra Mahendrāyudha, also called Mahendrapāla, son of Bhoja. Balavarman made a grant to the temple of the Sun named Taruṇāditya in A.D. 893. He killed Jajjapa of the Huṇa-race, and defeated a certain Vishaḍha. Jajjapa seems to have been the ruler of *Hūṇa-maṇḍala*, which was situated to the north-west of Mālava. Balavarman was succeeded by his son, *Mahāsāmanta* Avanivarman II, also known as Yoga. In A.D. 899 Avanivarman made a grant with the approval of Dhīika, the *tantrapāla* of Mahendrapāladeva. He claims to have defeated one Yakshadāsa and put to flight Dharaṇīvarāha, who belonged to the Chāpa dynasty of Vardhamānapura and was also a feudatory of the Pratihāras. He suffered a defeat at the hand of the Paramāra Sīyaka II in the latter part of his reign,[10] some time about the middle of the tenth century, when the Chālukyas were supplanted by the Ābhīras.

3. *The Varāhas of Sauryya-maṇḍala*

A king named Mahāvarāha ruled in Saurāshṭra in the third quarter of the eighth century A.D. The Baroda Plate of Karkarāja,[11] dated A.D. 812, states that the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa I (*c.* A.D. 756-72) put to flight Mahāvarāha, 'who being kindled with the warmth of the sun (*Sauryya*), attacked him.' In my opinion there is a pun on the word *Sauryya*, which may be referring to *Sauryya-maṇḍala*, mentioned in the Jaina *Harivaṁśa*. A fragmentary inscription, now deposited in the Barton Museum, Bhavanagar, states that Krishṇarāja was made to retreat from the Revā by a king named Varāha whose name may be restored as Mahāvarāha.[12] It thus corroborates the statement of the Baroda Plate that Mahāvarāha entered into a war with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa I. It is known from a passage in the Jaina *Harivaṁśa* (*ante*, p. 619) that in A.D. 783 the king Jayavarāha was ruling Sauryya-maṇḍala, which was situated to the west of Vardhamāna. Jayavarāha was in all probability a successor of Mahāvarāha. Nothing further is known of this Varāha family.

4. *The Chāpas*

The existence of the Chāpas, also known as Chāvaḍās, Chāvoṭakas, and Chāpotkaṭas, can be traced from the sixth century A.D. As noted

10 Cf. Author's *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*. Also, Ch. XXVI, (III).

11 *IA* XII, p. 159. L. 13. *Sauryy-oshma-saṁdīpitam*. Kielhorn suggests the *Sauryya* is an error for *Sauryya*, and translates the passage as '(*Mahāvarāha*) kindled with the warmth of bravery'.

12 *EI*, XIX, p. 174. Diskalkar restores the name as Ādivarāha and identifies him

above (p. 615), some time before A.D. 739 they suffered a defeat at the hands of the Arabs of Sindh. The Chāpas seem to have been divided into a number of branches, but the history of only two of them can be systematically traced. One of these ruled from Vardhamāna.[13] The earliest known king (*nripa*) of this line is Vikramārka, who may be taken to have flourished in the early years of the ninth century A.D. He seems to have submitted to the Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II when the latter invaded Saurāshṭra. For the Chāpas of Vardhamāna ruled as feudatories of the Pratihāras of Kanauj. The long-drawn struggle for supremacy between the Chāpas and the Saindhavas (p. 683) began from the reign of Vikramārka, in which, according to the Saindhava records, the Chāpas always suffered reverses. Vikramārka was succeeded by his son, king (*rājā*) Aḍḍaka, after whose name the country round Wadhwan, including the 'Limadi State', was known as Aḍḍanaka-*deśa*. Aḍḍanaka is identified with Haḍḍala in Kāthiāwār. Aḍḍaka was succeeded by his son Pulakeśi, who is also referred to as a king (*rājā*). Pulakeśi's son and successor was Dhruvabhaṭa, who was succeeded by his younger brother Dharaṇīvarāha. *Mahāsāmantādhipati* Dharaṇīvarāha, who is known to have been ruling the Aḍḍanaka-*deśa* in A.D. 914 as a feudatory of the Pratihāra Mahīpāla I, suffered defeat at the hands of the Chālukya Avanivarman II, Yogarāja of Junāgaḍh. In the middle of the tenth century A.D. the power of Dharaṇīvarāha was completely shattered by the Chaulukya Mūlarāja I after which the Chāpa king took shelter with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dhavala of Hastikuṇḍī.[14] Vardhamāna was annexed to the kingdom of the Chaulukyas.

A branch of the Chāpa dynasty is known to have ruled in Northern Gujarat. It is stated in some Gujarat chronicles that Vanarāja of the Chāpa family founded a city named Aṇahillapattana and established there the supremacy of his family in A.D. 745. Vanarāja was followed in succession by Yogarāja, Ratnāditya, Kshemarāja, Akadadeva, and Bhuyagadadeva or Bhuyadadeva, also known as Sāmantasiṁha. There is a little discrepancy between this list of the Chāpa kings and those supplied by other Gujarat chronicles, viz., *Vichāraśrenī*, *Sukritasaṁkīrttana*, and *Ratnamālā*. It was probably during the reign of Akadadeva that the Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II plundered Ānarta, modern Vaḍnagar in Baroda. The story runs that three brothers Rāji, Bīja, and Daṇḍaka, sons of Bhuvanāditya, king of Kalyāṇa-kaṭaka in

with the Pratihāra Bhoja I of Kanauj. Bhandarkar states that the word *Mahāvarāha* suits the metre better than Ādivarāha (Bh. *List*, no. 2106).

13 *IA*, XII, p. 193

14 *EI*, X, p. 20.

Kanauj, went in disguise on pilgrimage to Somanātha. While returning they attended the cavalry-parade organised by the king Sāmantasiṁha at Aṇahilapattana. On that occasion some intelligent remarks made by Rāji on the movements of the horses attracted the attention of Sāmantasiṁha, who took him to be a member of a royal family. The king was so much pleased with him that he gave his sister Līlādevī in marriage to him. Some time afterwards Līlādevī died leaving behind a son Mūlarāja. Mūlarāja grew up in the court of his maternal uncle and subsequently wielded the sovereignty, having slain the latter. It is difficult to estimate the historical value of this story in the absence of any contemporary evidence to support it. But that Mūlarāja got the sovereignty of Aṇahilapattana by defeating the Chāpas admits of no doubt.[15] It is known from the Vaḍnagar praśasti[16] of Kumārapāla that Mūlarāja I (A.D. 942-95) carried away 'the fortune of the kingdom of the Chāpotkaṭa princes'.

15 *BG*, I, Pt. I, p. 157.
16 *EI*, I, p. 296.

Chapter Twenty-five

THE RAJPUTS

1 THE ORIGIN

The bardic tales of Rājasthān, belonging to the mediaeval period, contain a stereotyped list of thirty-six Rājput clans. It includes such well-known names as the Huns and the Parihārs (Pratihāras) whose history has been narrated above. The existence of a few other clans of this list, including some of the most famous such as the Chāhamānas, Guhilas and Tomaras, can also be traced during the period dealt with in this volume. Although none of these is called a Rājput, and even the use of this term as a generic tribal or clan name is unknown before the end of the tenth century A.D., it has been customary to describe them as Rājputs from the very beginning. Some writers even go so far as to regard all the ruling families of North India after Harsha-vardhana as Rājputs. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss briefly the origin of the Rājputs before dealing with the history of the three clans mentioned above.

Some scholars are inclined to think that the origin of the Rājputs is essentially connected with that of the Gurjaras. Their views may be summed up as follows:

There are occasional references to the 'Gurjaras' in the records of the early period which enable us to trace their existence as from the latter part of the sixth century A.D.[1] According to Cunningham,[2] they were the descendants of the Kushans or Gushans. A. M. T. Jackson[3] propounds another theory about their origin. He points out that a tribe known as the Khazars (also as Chozars, Khozars, Ghusars, etc.) lived in South Armenia and Media in the fourth century A.D. The Arab writers believed that the Khazars were Georgians. A Georgian tradition relates that the Georgian king Vakhtang (A.D. 469-500) led an army to India. About this time the White Hūns also invaded India. It seems that the Khazars along with the Hūns poured

1 The earliest known epigraphic record to mention the name *Gurjara* is the Kaira plate of Dadda II, dated A.D. 629 (*IA*, XIII, p. 82). The earliest known literary source to refer to the Gurjaras is Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita,* which mentions that Prabhākara-vardhana (*c.* A.D. 580-605) defeated the Gurjaras.

2 *ASR*, II, p. 72.

3 *BC*, IX, p. 469; D. R. Bhandarkar, 'Gujaras', *JBBRAS*, XXI; p. 416.

into India and settled there in the early years of the sixth century A.D. These Khazars were known to the Indians as Gurjaras.

Tabari states that the Sassanian king Naushirwan (A.D. 537-79) of Persia proceeded to Balkh and conquered the countries of Tukharistan and Gurjistan. Gurjistan was 'apparently in the neighbourhood of the White Hun capital Badeghiz, which is described as bounded on the north by Merv, on the east by Gor, on the south by Ghazni, on the west by Herat'. Ibn Khurdadba (A.D. 912) mentions Gordjistan after Badeghiz. Thornton 'has a Gujaristan and a Gujar-i-Khashi on the road to Seistan'. Kalhaṇa refers to the Gurjara king Alakhāna, ruling in the Panjab (ninth century A.D.). Some parts of Rajasthan were known as Gurjaratrā or Gurjara in the ninth century. Modern Gujarat was known as Gurjara after the tenth century. All these may be regarded as the different landmarks of the migration of the Gurjaras from Afghanistan to western India.

The Rajore stone inscription (A.D. 959) states that Mathanadeva, a feudatory of Vijayapāla, belonged to the Gurjara-Pratihāra family. This means that the Pratihāras were a branch of the Gurjara tribe. Modern Gujarat came to be so called after the establishment of the Chaulukya sovereignty there. So the Chaulukyas were racially connected with the Gurjara tribe. According to bardic tales the Pratihāras. Chalukyas, the Paramāras and the Chāhamānas formed the Agnikula (fire-clans). Hence all the members of the Agnikula were offshoots of the Gurjara stock. By following the same line of argument the remaining thirty-two branches of the Rājput clans may also be taken as members of the Gurjara tribe whose foreign origin has already been noticed.

Such is the view of the origin of the Rājputs that now finds favour with a large number of scholars. But the evidence hitherto available in support of it cannot be regarded as conclusive. It is not, for example, definitely known that the Gurjaras were identical with the Khazars. The earliest trace of the Gurjaras is found in Rajasthan in the sixth or the early years of the seventh century A.D.[4] It is not unlikely that some Gurjara people from Rajasthan migrated northward, established settlements in the Panjab and Afghanistan, and called them after the name of their original home, just as some people of Kaliṅga, Kāmboja etc. called their settlements in the Malay peninsula

4 See above p. 238. The Gurjaras are referred to in the Aihole ins., *EI*, VI, pp. 1 ff. and the *Harsha-charita*. The *Maṇimēkalai*, a poem composed in the Tamil country, states that the Gurjaras built a temple at Puhār on the Kāverī (*JDL.*, X, p. 3). It is generally agreed that the poem was composed before the sixth century A.D. But V. A. Smith, on the assumption that the Gurjaras came to India in the early part of the sixth century A.D., puts a late date for the work.

after the names of their mother countries. Even if it is assumed that the Gurjaras were identical with the Khazars, there is no evidence to connect them with the Rājputs. Of the four branches of the Agnikula, as related by the bards of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Paramāras alone claimed fire origin.[5] The records of the other three branches narrate quite different stories about the birth of the respective founders of their families.[6] As a matter of fact no ethnic connection between these four branches has yet been definitely established. It may be regarded as almost certain that the Paramāras and the Chaulukyas were distinct from the Gurjaras.[7] For, Harichandra, Guhila, and Vāsudeva, who were respectively the founders of the Pratihāra, Guhila, and the Chāhamāna dynasties, were Brāhmaṇas by caste, and flourished about A.D. 550.[8] If they were Gurjaras, their fathers or grandfathers are to be associated with those members of the tribe who first settled in India. It is inexplicable how these people, who were accustomed to speak a different tongue and to different modes of life could pass as Brāhmaṇas almost immediately after their settlement in this country. Harichandra was even well-versed in *śāstras*. Both literary and epigraphic sources indicate that during this period it was not possible for anybody who was not a son of a Brāhmaṇa through a Brāhmaṇa wife to claim the rank of a Brāhmaṇa, Harichandra's sons through his Kshatriya wife were degraded to the position of the Kshatriyas (above, p. 238). This should be taken into account before accepting the current view on the origin of the Rājputs.

The expression *Gurjara,* mentioned in the records of the pre-Muslim period, does not anywhere definitely signify a tribe.[9] But there is ample evidence to prove that it was the name of a country. Such expressions of Veṅgī-Chālukya (Chālukyas of Veṅgī), *Kaliṅga-Gaṅga* (Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga) etc. are occasionally found in the records of the early period.[10] So the expression *Gurjara-Pratihār-ānvaya* may very reasonably be taken to mean the Pratihāra dynasty of the Gurjara country, the object being to distinguish the Pratihāra dynasty to which Mathanadeva belonged from that of the Kānyakubja-Pratihāra dynasty of which his overlord Vijayapāla was a member.

5 Author's *History of the Paramāra Dynasty,* p. 1.

6 *DHNI,* II, p. 1053; *EI;* XVIII, p. 97; *ibid.,* II, p. 125.

7 Author's *Eastern Chālukyas,* pp. 1 ff; *History of the Paramāra Dynasty,* pp. 1 ff. The Paramāras and the Chauhāns claim that they defeated the Gurjaras. If they themselves were members of this tribe they would not have put forward this claim. (This is hardly convincing—*Ed.*)

8 Above, pp. 238 and see below sectt. ii, iii.

9 But cf. above, p. 237.

10 *EI,* VI, pp. 224, 276 n.

The epigraphic records and the accounts of the Arab geographers occasionally refer to the Gurjaras, king of Gurjara (*Gurjareśvara*) etc. It has been assumed by some scholars that these expressions refer to the Pratihāras of Mālava and Kanauj, because they belong to the Gurjara tribe. But a close scrutiny of all these sources leads to a different conclusion.

The Śravaṇa Belgola epigraph[11] states that the Gaṅga Satyavākya-Koṅguṇivarman became known as 'the king of the Gurjaras' by conquering the northern region for Kṛishṇa III. Nobody thinks that the Gaṅgas had any racial connection with the Gurjaras.[12]

The Arab writers[13] Sulaimān, Abū Zaid, Ibn Khurdadba, Al Balādhurī, Al Mas'ūdī, and Al Idrīsī mention 'Jurz' or 'Juzr'. Two of them, viz., Sulaimān and Al Mas'ūdī, visited India. Sulaimān and Abū Zaid report that Jurz is a State. Al Balādhurī makes it clear that Jurz is the name of a country. So the expression, referred to by other Arab writers, should be taken to convey the identical meaning. Some time the Pratihāras were called the 'lords of Gurjara' simply because the Gurjara country was within their kingdom. Thus it is not easy to endorse the view that the Rājputs were members of the Gurjara tribe.[13a]

The early history of some Rājput clans, except that of the Pratihāras which has been related above in Ch. XXII, may now be briefly narrated.

II. THE CHĀHAMĀNAS

The bards of the fourteenth century relate that the Chauhāns belonged to the *Agnikula*. But, as already mentioned, the inscriptions and the literary works referring to the Chāhamānas (Chauhāns) are all silent about it. The *Pṛithvīrājavijaya* and the *Hammīra-Mahākāvya*[14] state that the eponymous hero Chāhamāna was born from the Sūrya-Maṇḍala. There were several branches of the Chāhamāna dynasty, viz., Chāhamānas of Śakambharī, of Lāṭa, of Dhavalapurī, of

11 *Ibid.*, V, p. 176, lines 6-8.

12 Cf (1) Author's 'Origin of the Pratīhāra Dynasty', *IHQ*, X, p. 337.
(2) 'Pratīhāras and the Gurjaras', *JBORS*, XXIV, p. 221.
(3) 'Gurjaras in the Rāshṭrakūṭa Inscriptions', *PIHC*, III, p. 513.

13 Author's (1) 'History of the Gurjara country', *IHQ*, X, p. 621.

13a The author makes a fair summary of the different views on the subject. A similar view is also expressed by K. M. Munshi in his book, *Glory That was Gurjara Deśa* Part I. No definite conclusion is possible on this question (Editor).

14 *Pṛithvīrāja-vijaya*, ed. S. K. Belvalkar, Bib. Ind. (New Series); *Hammīra-Mahākāvya* of Nayachandra Suri, ed. N. G. Kirtane, Bombay.

Partābgarh, of Raṇthambhor, of Naḍḍula, of Jāvālipura, and of Satyapura. The main branch ruled in Śākambharī, and the others, ruling in different places, were collateral. The Lāṭa branch of the Chāhamānas is only known from a single record, viz., the Hansot plate which gives the following genealogy of this feudatory Chāhamāna family.[15]

Maheśvaradāma
|
Bhīmadāma

Bhartṛivaḍḍha I
|
Haradāma
|
Dhrūbhaṭa
|
Bhartṛivaḍḍha II.

Bhartṛivaḍḍha II issued the Hansot plate from Bhṛigukachchha in A.D. 756. His overlord was Nāgāvaloka, who is generally identified with the Pratihāra Nāgābhaṭa I of Mālava. The inscription records that Bhartṛivaḍḍha II granted a village in the Akrureśvara-*vishaya* (mod. Ankleśvara tāluk). As Jayabhaṭa IV ruled Broach at least up to A.D. 736, it does not seem likely that all the five predecessors of Bhartṛivaḍḍha II ruled in Broach.

The *Pṛithvīrāja-vijaya* and other literary works mention Vāsudeva as the first king of the Sākambharī line. The *Prabandhakośa*,[16] a work of the fourteenth century, fixes V.S. 608 (A.D. 551) as the date of the accession of Vāsudeva. The *Pṛithvīrāja-vijaya* mentions Sāmanta as born in the lineage of Vāsudeva; and as Vigraharāja II, the twelfth king from Sāmanta, was ruling in A.D. 973,[17] Sāmanta may be placed in the middle of the seventh century A.D. The Bijolia inscription,[18] dated A.D. 1169, states that Sāmanta was born in the Vatsa-*gotra* at Ahichchhatrapura. Some identify Ahichchhatrapura with the city of this name, which is now represented by Rāmnagar, in the Bareilly district U.P., and suggest that the Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces) was the early home of the Chāhamānas. But an inscription[19] from Rajasthan

15 *EI*, XII, p. 202.

16 *Rep Sans. Mss., S. India*, Hultzsch, III, p. 112, no. 1966.

17 *DHNI*, II, p. 1137.

18 *JASB*, LV, Pt. I, p. 40. It does not mention the name of Vāsudeva and draws the genealogy from Sāmanta.

19 *JRAS*, 1913, p. 264, n. 1.

relates that Ahichchhatrapura was the capital of Jāṅguladeśa (Jāṅgala-*deśa*) and the *Pārthaparākrama*[20] also states that Prithvīrāja III, a remote descendant of Sāmanta, was the king of Jāṅgala. G.H. Ojha identifies this country with Bikanir and northern Mārwār. In view of the fact that the Chāhamānas were in possession of Sambhar long before Sāmanta's reign, Ahichchhatrapura, which was the capital of Jāṅgala-*deśa*[21] mentioned in the Bijolia inscription, should be identified with it.

Sāmantarāja was followed in succession by Pūrṇatalla, Jayarāja and Vigraharāja I. Vigraharāja I, who ruled in the middle of the eighth century A.D., had two sons Chandrarāja and Gopendrarāja. Both these princes ruled in succession in the second half of the eighth century, after the death of their father. The next ruler of Śākambhari was Durlabharāja, son of Chandrarāja. Durlabharāja, who flourished in the latter part of the eighth century, was apparently a feudatory of the Pratihāra Vatsarāja, whose kingdom extended from Avanti to Didwana in the Jodhpur region. Durlabharāja is said to have defeated the king of Gauḍa and to have taken his bath in the Gaṅgāsāgara.[22] His overlord Vatsarāja is also known to have won a victory over the king of Gauḍa. As Durlabharāja had not sufficient resources to lead independently an army against such a distant country as Bengal, it is very likely that he went there in the company of his overlord. The Gauḍa king, who suffered a defeat at the hands of Durlabharāja, was in all probability Dharmapāla. The *Prithvīrāja-vijaya* mentions the name of Durlabharāja's son and successor as Govindarāja. The Bijolia Rock inscription, on the other hand, states that Durlabha was succeeded by Guvāka. Govindarāja and Guvāka are evidently one and the same prince. He is said to have attained pre-eminence in the court of Nāgāvaloka, the foremost of kings, i.e., the Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II.[23] This implies that the Chāhamānas under Govindarāja continued to owe allegiance to the Pratihāras. The *Prabhandhakośa*, a work of the fourteenth century A.D., states that the Chāhamāna Govindarāja repulsed an attack of the Sultan Vega Varisa. About this time Bashar, son of Dāūd, was the governor of Sindh under the Caliph Mamun (A.D. 813-33), and Vega Varisa may be taken as identical with him. The Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II, the overlord of Govindarāja, is known to have defeated the Turushkas, i.e., the Arabs of Sindh. The *Khum-*

20 GOS, nos. 4, 3. For other references to Jāṅgala, cf., *Vienna Oriental Journal;* XXI, p. 142; Bh. *List*, nos. 781, 1522.

21 *Nāgarī-Prachāriṇī Patrikā*, Vol. II, pt. III. Some hold that Jāṅgala may be identified with Pañchāla. *JASB*, 1922, p. 287.

22 *Prithvīrāja-vijaya*, Sarga; V, v. 20.

23 *EI*, II, pp. 116 ff.

māṇa Rāso, a work of late date, relates that the Guhila Khommāṇa, along with other kings, repulsed an attack of the Arabs under 'Mahmud Khorasan Pat'. Tod remarks that Mahmud is an error for Mamun, who is identical with the Caliph Al-Mamun. It may be presumed that while Nāgabhaṭa II was fighting with the Arabs of Sindh, he was assisted by his two feudatories, the Chāhamāna Govindarāja I and the Guhila Khommāṇa.[24] Govindarāja was succeeded by his son Chandrarāja II who seems to have assumed another name, Saśinṛipa. Chandrarāja II had a son named Guvāka II and daughter Kalāvatī. After the death of his father, Guvāka II ascended the throne and gave his sister in marriage to a king of Kānyakubjā who may be identified with the Pratihāra Bhoja I.[25] He seems to have suffered a defeat at the hands of the Kalachuri Kokkala I of Ḍāhala, who claims to have won a victory over the king of Śākambharī.[26] He was succeeded by his son Chandanarāja who may be taken to have flourished in the latter part of the ninth century A.D. Chandanarāja killed in battle a chief of the Tomara dynasty named Rudrena.[27] His queen Rudrāṇī, also known as Ātmaprabhā, installed one thousand *liṅgas* on the banks of Pushkara. He was succeeded by his son Vākpatirāja I, who may be taken to have flourished in the first quarter of the tenth century. Vākpati seems to have assumed another name Vindhyanṛipati (?). About this time the Pratihāras under their king Mahīpāla I were passing through a period of stress and strain in consequence of the invasion of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III (above, p. 641). This offered an opportunity to the feudatories of the Pratihāras to bid for independent political status. It is stated that Vākpati put to flight an officer (*tantrapāla*), who was coming towards the Ananta country to deliver a message of his overlord.[28] The suzerain lord of Vākpati may be identified with the Pratīhāra Mahīpāla I, and Ananta (Anantagochara) is perhaps the other name of the kingdom of Śākambharī, where the Chāhamānas ruled. Though the details of the incident are not available, it may be regarded as almost certain that the relation between the Chāhamānas and their overlords the Pratihāras was anything but friendly.

Vākpati had three sons Siṁharāja, Vatsarāja, and Lakshmaṇa. Siṁharāja succeeded to the throne of his father, and Lakshmaṇa founded a new kingdom at Naḍḍula in Godwar. Siṁharāja defeated a leader named Salavana, who belonged to the Tomara family, and

24 Author's 'A Forgotten Moslem Invasion', *IHQ*, XIV, pp. 813 ff.
25 *EI*, XXVI, p. 91.
26 *IA*, XIX, p. 78.
27 *EI*, II, p. 121.
28 *Ibid.*, pp. 116 ff

put to flight and captured the host of feudatories who had assembled under his banner. The captured princes were thrown into prison, but were subsequently released by his overlord, who came in person to effect it.[29] This overlord, who was a universal sovereign of the 'family of Raghu', was evidently a successor of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla II (A.D. 946). The fact that this overlord had to go in person to the capital of his feudatory to liberate his imprisoned vassals indicates that he had lost much of his control over the Chāhamānas. This assumption gains further corroboration from the fact that Siṁharāja is described in the Harsha Stone inscription of his successor as *Mahārājādhirāja,* a title used by independent chiefs.[30]

Siṁharāja granted some villages to the temple of Harshanātha on the top of the hill named Harsha, close to the modern village of Harshanātha, in the Shikawati province of the old Jaipur State. The construction of the temple was completed by a Śaiva teacher named Allata in A.D. 956.[31] Siṁharāja, had four sons—Vigraharāja II, Durlabharāja II, Chandrarāja, and Govindarāja. Vigraharāja II succeeded to the throne of his father some time after A.D. 956. During the reign of this king the Chāhamānas extended their military power to a considerable extent. Vigraharāja II thought himself sufficiently strong to launch an aggressive campaign against the Chaulukyas of Gujarat, which was then ruled by Mūlarāja I, the founder of the Chaulukya dynasty. Mūlarāja fled to the fort of Kanthakot in Cutch, leaving his kingdom at the mercy of the invader. Vigraharāja overran Gujarat and reached the Narmadā. He built at Bhṛigukachchha on the Narmadā the temple of the goddess Āśāpurī. Subsequently Vigraharāja concluded a treaty with Mūlarāja, restored his kingdom, and withdrew from Gujarat.[32] He also granted some villages for the maintenance of the temple of Harshanātha. During this period Pushkara-*tīrtha,* Paṭṭabhaddaka-*vishaya,* Sarahkoṭṭa-*vishaya,* Jayapura-*vishaya,* Darbhakaksha-*vishaya* and Khattakūpa-*vishaya* were included in the kingdom of Śākambhari.[33] Vigraharāja II is known to have been ruling in A.D. 973. Some time after this date he was succeeded by his younger brother Durlabharāja. In the closing years of Vigraharāja II's reign the kingdom of the Chāhamānas of Śākambharī extended at least as far as Sikar on the north, the town of Jaipur on the east, and Pushkar near Ajmer on the south.

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Pṛithvīrāja-vijaya; Hammīramahākāvya, IA,* VIII, pp. 59 ff. *Prabandhachintāmaṇi,* ed.. Tawney, pp. 23 ff.

33 *EI,* II, p. 116.

It has been noticed above (p. 694) that Lakshmaṇa, son of Vākpatirāja I of Śākambhari, founded a kingdom at Naḍḍula or Nadol, in the Desuri district, Godwar division of the old Jodhpur State. He had two sons Śobhita and Vigrahapāla. Śobhita, who succeeded his father on the throne, is said to have won a victory over the lord of Himādribhava, i.e., Mt. Abu in the old Sirohi State.[34] Śobhita's son and successor Balirāja repulsed an attack of the Paramāra Muñja[35] who invaded Nadol after his conquest of Mewar.

A branch of the Chāhamāna family ruled at Dhavalapurī, modern Dholpur, in Rajasthan, in the ninth century, apparently as a feudatory of the Pratihāras of Kanauj. Its relation with the Chāhamānas of Śākambharī cannot be determined. We know only three chief of the family, viz., Īsuka, his son Mahisharāma, and the latter's son Chaṇḍamahāsena. Chaṇḍamahāsena received homage from some Mlechchha chiefs, settled on the bank of the Charmaṇvatī (Chambal). These Mlechchha chiefs cannot be identified, but were most probably Muslims. Chaṇḍamahāsena built a temple of Chaṇḍasvāmin at Dhavalapurī, in A.D. 842.[36]

Another branch of the Chāhamāna family is known to have ruled in the old Partābgarh State of Rajasthan, in the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. as vassals of the Pratihāras. Its relation with other branches of the Chāhamāna family is not known. The early members of the family are described as a source of great pleasure to the king Bhojadeva, i.e., the Pratihāra Bhoja, son of Rāmabhadra. This probably implies that they helped Bhoja in his endeavour to recover the prosperity of the Pratihāras. In the family of these princes was born Govindarāja, who was succeeded by his son Durlabharāja. Durlabharāja's son and successor was *Mahāsāmanta* Indrarāja, who was a vassal of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla II. Indrarāja built a temple of the Sun-God Indrāditya at the village of Ghoṇṭavarshikā, in the western *pathaka* of Daśapura (Mandasor).[37] The village is identified with Ghotarsi, 7 miles east of Partabgarh. Nothing is known of this family after Indrāditya.

III. GUHILAS OF MEWAR

Bardic tales and inscriptions connect the Guhilas with both the Solar and Lunar dynasties.[38] The early members of this family are

34 *Ibid.*, IX, p. 75.
35 *Ibid.*
36 *ZDMG*, XL, p. 38.
37 *EI*, XIV, p. 160.
38 *Prākṛit and Sanskṛit Inscriptions of Kāthiāwār*, p. 141, ll. 27-36.

said to have been Brāhmaṇas.[39] The story runs that when Śīlāditya, the last king of the Valabhī dynasty, met with a disastrous end in A.D. 524, his queen took shelter in a cave (*guhā*) and gave birth to a son, who was named Guhila (cave-born).[40] As soon as he attained the age of discretion the Bhils of Idar appointed him as their king.[41] Guhila, after whom the dynasty is named, was succeeded by a number of kings in Idar. The eighth king, Nāgāditya, was overthrown by the Bhils. Nāgāditya's young son Bappa was reared up by a Brahmin family in the hilly tract called Nāgīndra.[42] Bappa, as he grew up in age, became the disciple of Hārita, a devotee of Ekaliṅga. After the death of the Śaiva teacher, Bappa accepted service under his uncle, the Mori prince of Chitor. He made a mark by repulsing an attack of the barbarians from Garji and seized the throne of Chitor.

The *Ekaliṅga-māhātmya*,[43] composed during the reign of the Rāṇā Kumbha (A.D. 1431-61), fixes V. S. 810 (A.D. 753) as the close of Bappa's reign. So, according to the above account Guhila or Guhadatta, the founder of the family, must have ruled in Idar about the middle of the sixth century A.D. But the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī, of which Śīlāditya was a member, ruled in Gujarat up to the middle of the eighth century. So the bardic story narrating the early history of the Guhilas cannot be accepted in all its details, and should be treated with great caution. There is, however, evidence to prove that at least a part of Mewar, if not the whole of it, was in the possession of the successors of Guhila in the middle of the seventh century.[44] The Atpur inscription[45] of the king Śaktikumāra of this dynasty, dated A.D. 977, states that his ancestor Guhadatta came from Ānandapura, modern Vaḍnagar, in Gujarat. So the bardic tale mentioning Gujarat as the early home of the Guhila also seems to be true. The same record supplies us for the first time a regular genealogy of the family which runs thus:[46]

1. Guhadatta or Guhila
2. Bhoja
3. Mahīndra (I)
4. Nāga or Nāgāditya

39 *IA*, XXXIX, p. 186; *JASB*, 1909, p. 173.

40 Crooke, *An. Rajasthan*, I, p. 247.

41 Idar may be identified with the 'state' of this name to the east of Vaḍnagar, Gujarat.

42 Nāgīndra, same as Nāgadraha, or Nāgahrada, is identified with Nāgdā, Udaipur.

43 VV, 19-20.

44 *EI*, IV, p. 29; XX, p. 97.

45 Tod's *Annals*, I, p. 706; *IA*, XXXIX, p. 191.

46 Bhandarkar's *List* No. 85. *DHNI*, II, p. 1206.

5. Śīla or Śīlāditya (A.D. 646)
6. Aparājita (A.D. 661)
7. Mahīndra (II)
8. Kālabhoja
9. Khommāṇa I
10. Mattaṭa

etc.

The inscription does not mention the name of Bappa. Many inscriptions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries place Bappa before Guhila.[47] But this seems to be erroneous in view of the fact that a stone inscription,[48] dated A.D. 971, of the reign of Naravāhana, mentions Bappaka (Bappa) as a 'moon amongst the princes of the Guhila family' and as the ruler of Nāgahrada (Nāgadraha). This implies that Bappa ruled after Guhila. Almost all the scholars agree that Bappa is to be identified with one of the early kings of Mewar line. The Kumbhalgarh inscription[49] of the Rāṇā Kumbha, dated A.D. 1460, places Bappa between Nāga and Aparājita. This has led some to suggest that Bappa was the title of Śīlāditya. In support of this it may be said that Śīlāditya is the earliest known king of the family to rule in Mewar. But D. R. Bhandarkar[50] thinks that the report of the *Ekaliṅga-māhātmya* that Bappa closed his reign in A.D. 753 should be accepted as authentic. In view of the fact that Aparājita was ruling in A.D. 661, Khommāṇa I is to be placed in the middle of the eighth century, and accordingly Bhandarkar regards Bappa as the title of Khommāṇa I. But G. H. Ojha[51] argues that as, according to both *Rājapraśasti-mahākāvya* and *Khyāta* of Nainsi, Bappa was the title of Khommāṇa's father, he (Bappa) should be identified with Kālabhoja. We learn from the Dhoḍ inscription (A.D. 726)[52] and the Kaṇaswa inscription[53] (A.D. 738) that a king named Dhavalappa of the Maurya dynasty was ruling the old Kotah State in the second quarter of the eighth century. It is known from the Nausari plate of Pulakeśin,[54] dated A.D. 739, that the Arabs destroyed the Maurya kingdom. It has accordingly been suggested that Kālabhoja Bappa repulsed an attack of the Arabs against the Ekaliṅgaji's temple, and after the departure of the invaders, usurped the throne of Chitor,

47 Bhandarkar's *List*, Nos. 610, 784.
48 *JBBRAS*, XXII, p. 166.
49 *PRASI*, I, WC, 1905-06, p. 61, no. 2214.
50 *JASB* 1909, pp. 189-90.
51 *History of Rājputānā*, I, p. 409.
52 The date of this inscription will be discussed later.
53 *IA*, XIX, p. 57.
54 *Vienna Oriental Congress*, Aryan Section, p. 230.

which might have been under the supremacy of the Mauryas. In later times this invasion of the Arabs was recorded as an invasion of the barbarians from Gajni.[55] But it must be admitted that there is no evidence to prove that the Guhilas were in possession of Chitor even in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. When the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III (A.D. 794-814) invaded Chitor, it was under the supremacy of the Gurjaras.[56]

Ojha suggests that the Guhilas ruled from Nāgadraha from the time of Guhila. He rejects the traditional story that Guhila first established himself at Idar.[57]

Nothing particular is known about the first four kings, Guhila, Bhoja, Mahīndra I, and Nāga, from any authentic record. A stone inscription,[58] dated A.D. 646, of the reign of the fifth king Śīlāditya has been found in the village of Samoli in the Bhumat district. Ojha reports that there is a copper coin, bearing the legend *Śīla,* in the possession of a person in Udaipur.[59] Śīlāditya was succeeded by Aparājita. A stone inscription,[60] dated A.D. 661, of the reign of this king has been found near the temple of Kuṇḍeśvara at Nāgdā, in the vicinity of Udaipur. It appears from this inscription that the king (*rājā*) Aparājita's commander of the army was the *Mahārāja* Varāhasiṁha. Aparājita was followed in succession by Mahīndra II and Kālabhoja. If the suggestion that Kālabhoja had the title Bappa has got any substance, Mahīndra is to be identified with Nāgāditya of the bardic tale, who was overthrown by the Bhils. The Chitor stone inscription,[61] dated A.D. 1274, states that Bappa became the king of Medapāṭa and its city Nāgahrada through the favour of the sage Hāritarāśi. The Abu inscription of Samarasiṁha,[62] dated V. S. 1342, states that Kālabhoja defeated the Karṇāṭas and the Choḍas. A gold coin has the legend *Śrī-Voppa* with a liṅga and a bull on the obverse, and the figure of a cow suckling its calf on the reverse.[63] Ojha ascribes this coin to Bappa.[63a] The next king Khommāṇa I, who flourish-

55 *DHNI*, II, pp. 1154-60.

56 *EI*, VI, pp. 102-03. (But this interpretation is not accepted by others. CLC, *BG*; I, II, p. 396. Ed.).

57 *History of Rājputānā*, II, p. 418.

58 *EI*, XX, p. 97.

59 *Op. cit.*, II, p. 403.

60 *EI*, IV, p. 31.

61 *IA*, XXII, p. 80.

62 *Ibid.*, XVI, p. 346.

63 *PRASI*, WC., 1921, p. 57; *JASB*, 1927, Numismatic Supplement (XXII), pp. 14 ff.

63a Śrī-Voppa has been identified by some with King Vappuka of the Śūrasena dynasty of Kaman and Bayana in Jaipur. *JNSI*, XX, pp. 26 ff; XXII, p. 279 (KKDG).

ed in the third quarter of the eighth century A.D., was followed on the throne by Mattata, Bhartribhata I, Simha, and Khommāṇa II in succession. As noted above (pp. 624, 694) Khommāṇa II probably fought a battle with the Muslims under the leadership of the Pratihāra Nāgabhaṭa II.[64] Khommāṇa II was followed on the throne by Mahāyaka and Khommāṇa III in succession. Khommāṇa III was succeeded by his son Bhartṛipaṭṭa or Bhartṛibhaṭa II. A stone inscription[65] of his reign, dated A.D. 943, has been discovered at Ādhāra, ancient Āghāṭa, a few miles north of Udaipur. From this time Āghāṭa served as the capital of this branch of the Guhilas. It is known from the Partabgarh inscription[66] that the *Mahārājādhirāja* Bhartṛipaṭṭa II granted a village to the temple of Indrādityadeva at Ghoṇṭāvarshi, in A.D. 942. Ghoṇṭāvarshi is the modern village of Ghotarsi, 7 miles east of Partabgarh. Bhartṛipaṭṭa's kingdom thus extended at least from Āhār to the neighbourhood of Ghotarsi. Bhartṛipaṭṭa II seems to have been more powerful than his predecessors, and was succeeded by his son Allaṭa. A stone inscription[67] in the Śaraṇeśvara temple at Āhāra, of the reign of Allaṭa, records that the construction of temple was begun in A.D. 951 and completed in 953. A fragmentary inscription[68] in a temple at Āhār states that Allaṭa killed his enemy Devapāla in a battle. Devapāla may be taken as identical with the Pratihāra Devapāla, who is known to have been ruling in A.D. 948. It has already been noticed that in the middle of the tenth century the Pratihāra empire was on its decline. This encouraged the Chandellas, the Chāhamānas, and the Guhilas to bid for independent political power, and Devapāla might have lost his life in his attempt to bring the Guhilas under control. During this period Āghāṭa, the capital of the Guhilas, became a great centre of trade, attracting merchants from Karṇāṭa, Lāṭa, Madhya-deśa, and Ṭakka.[69] Allaṭa married a Hūṇa lady named Hariyadevī, who gave birth to Naravāhana. The Atpur inscription[70] states that 'her fame shone forth in the form of Harshapura', which probably means that she beautified a city of this name. Mammaṭa was a councillor of Allaṭa, and Durlabharāja was the king's 'Minister for peace and war'. Allaṭa was succeeded by Naravāhana who is known to have been ruling in A.D. 971, the date of the

64 *IHQ*, XIV, pp. 813 ff.
65 Bhandarkar's, *List*, no. 60.
66 *EI* XIV, p. 177.
67 *IA*, LVIII, p. 162.
68 G. H. Ojha, *History of Rājputānā*, II, p. 428.
69 *IA*, LVIII, p. 162.
70 *Ibid.*, XXXIX, p. 186.

Ekaliṅga stone inscription[71] of his reign, which was discovered in the temple of Nātha, 14 miles north of Udaipur. Naravāhana married a Chāhamāna lady named Jejaya. His son and successor was Sālivāhana, who was followed by his son Śaktikumāra. Three stone inscriptions[72] of Śaktikumāra's reign have been discovered at Āhār, one of which is dated A.D. 977. About this time the Paramāra Muñja overran Medapāṭa, and plundered Āghāṭa. The Guhila king, who may be identified with Śaktikumāra, saved his life by taking refuge with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dhavala of Hastikuṇḍi. The occupation of Medāpāṭa by the Paramāras was not, however, of long duration.

IV. GUHILAS OF CHATSU

A branch of the Guhila dynasty is known to have been ruling in the old Jaipur State of Rajasthan, which formed part of the ancient Gurjaratrā or the Gurjara country,[73] from the middle of the seventh century A.D. down to the middle of the tenth century. There are reasons to believe that the expression of *Gurjara*, mentioned in the records of this period, sometimes refers to these Guhilas. The history of this Guhila dynasty is mainly derived from an inscription found engraved on the wall of a ruined temple near the great tank at the town of Chatsu, 26 miles south of the city of Jaipur.[74] A suggestion has been advanced that Chatsu was the capital of the kings of this family, but D. R. Bhandarkar thinks that their capital was Dhavagartā, modern Dhoḍ, in Jahāzpur district, Mewar.[75] One may, however, be inclined to locate it at Hindaun, in the Jaipur area, which was the ancient capital of Gurjara.[76] It may be inferred from the epigraphic and the numismatic[77] evidence that the kingdom of this branch of the Guhilas extended from the Jahāzpur district, Mewar, to Agra, in the Uttar Pradesh. Altogether twelve kings of this dynasty are known. As the fifth king Dhanika was ruling in A.D. 684 and the ninth king Harsha was a contemporary of the Pratihāra Bhoja (A.D. 836-92), Bhartṛipaṭṭa, the earliest known king of the dynasty, may be taken to have flourished in the beginning of the seventh century A.D. or somewhat earlier.

71 *JBBRAS*, XXII, p. 166.

72 *IA* XXXIX, p. 186; C. Bendall, *Journey in Nepal and Northern India*, p. 82; *PRASI*, WC, 1906, p. 62; Ojha, *History of Rājputānā*, II. pp. 434, 437.

73 *IHQ*, X, p. 613.

74 *EI*, XII, p. 10.

75 *DHNI*, II, p. 1197.

76 *JBORS*, XXIV, p. 221.

77 *ASR*, IV, p. 95.

The Chatsu inscription relates that Bhartṛipaṭṭa was born in the family of Guhila, and was a Brahma-Kshatriya, but Śaṅkaragaṇa, the eighth king of the dynasty, is called a *dvija,* which is applicable to Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya or Vaiśya, though preferably to the Brāhmaṇas. Bhartṛipaṭṭa's great-grandson was the King Guhila I. More than two thousand silver coins bearing the legend *Śrī-Guhila* have been unearthed in Agra.[78] H. C. Ray assigns these coins to Guhila II, the tenth king of this line, but may be attributed to Guhila I. Guhila's son was Dhanika, one of whose known dates is A.D. 684.[79] A stone inscription found in Dhoḍ, the date of which has been doubtfully read as (G. E.) 407 (A.D. 726),[80] mentions Dhanika and his overlord *Mahārājādhirāja* Dhavaḷappa. Dhavaḷappa has been identified with the Maurya Dhavala of the Kaṇaswa inscription (above, p. 698) and Dhanika with the son of Guhila I. If we accept these suggestions it will follow that these Guhilas acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mauryas of Kotah for some time. Dhanika was succeeded by his son Āuka, who flourished in the middle of the eighth century A.D. Al Balādhurī[81] relates that Junaid conquered Al-Bailman and Jurz (Gurjara). The Nausari plates of Pulakesin (p. 698), dated A.D. 738, state that the Arabs destroyed the Maurya and Gurjara kings. It seems that the Maurya Dhavala and his feudatory Dhanika or Auka suffered defeat in their hands. Āuka was succeeded by his son Kṛishṇarāja. It was probably in the second half of the eighth century A.D. that the Pratihāras succeeded in asserting their supremacy over this branch of the Guhilas, for the kingdom of the Pratihāra Vatsarāja, as noted above, extended from Avanti to the Jodhpur State. Kṛishṇarāja's son and successor, Śaṅkaragaṇa, probably flourished in the first quarter of the ninth century A.D., and was a contemporary of Vatsarāja's successor Nāgabhaṭa II. The Chatsu inscription of the Guhilas reports that Śaṅkaragaṇa conquered the empire of the Gauḍa king and presented it to his master. It has been noticed above (p. 623) that Nāgabhaṭa II with the help of his feudatories wrested the kingdom of Kanauj from the Pāla king Dharmapāla of Bengal and the latter's protégé Chakrāyudha, the ruler of Kanauj. Śaṅkaragaṇa seems to have rendered military service to his Pratihāra overlord on this occasion. Śaṅkaragaṇa was succeeded by his son Harsharāja, who was a feudatory of Nāgabhata II's grandson Bhoja. Harsha is stated to have conquered all the kings of the Udīchya country and presented to

78 *Ibid.*

79 Nagar (or Agra) ins., *Bhārata-Kaumudī.* pt. 1, p. 267.

80 Bhandarkar reads the date with doubt as G. E. 407, see *EI,* XII, p. 12, n. 1; Ojha reads the date as (H. E.) 207 (*HR,* II, p. 421) cf. also *EI,* XX, p. 122.

81 *HIED,* I, p. 126.

Bhoja horses, which were born of the Śrī family, and which were expert in traversing the Indus. Udīchya is identical with Uttarāpatha, which extended from Pehowa in the Karnal district, Haryana, to at least Jalālābād in Afghanistan. Bhoja seems to have conquered the Ṭakka country or the Panjab with the help of Harsha. The Benares copper-plate of the Kalachuri Karṇa states that the Kalachuri Kokkalla I subjugated Harsha, Chitrakūṭa-*bhūpāla* (king) and others. This Harsha was most probably the Guhila king of this name. If Kielhorn is correct in suggesting that Harsha and the Chitrakūṭa-*bhūpāla* of the Benares plate are identical, Chitrakūṭa or Chitor, in Mewar, will have to be taken as the capital of this king. It may be inferred from the Nilgund inscription of the Rāshṭrakūṭas that in the early years of the ninth century the Gurjaras dwelt in the hill fort of Chitrakūṭa. It has been suggested that the Gurjaras were none other than Guhilas of the Chatsu branch, who were in occupation of at least a part of Gurjaratrā or the Gurjara country. This is not, however, definite, and it may be assumed that Harsha conquered Chitrakūṭa after defeating the Gurjaras.[82]

Harsha was succeeded by his son Guhila II, who seems to have been a vassal of Bhoja's son and successor Mahendrapāla I. Guhila II is reported to have conquered Gauḍa and levied tribute from the princes of the east, which evidently means that he helped Mahendrapāla in conquering the Gauḍa country (above, p. 637). Guhila's queen Rajjhā was the daughter of Vallabharāja, who was a member of an otherwise unknown branch of the Paramāra family. As noted above, some coins bearing the legend *Śrī-Guhila* have been assigned to Guhila II. Guhila II was succeeded by his son Bhaṭṭa, who may be taken to have been a contemporary of Mahendrapāla's sons Bhoja II and Mahīpāla I. The Chatsu inscription states that 'the southern sea presented gems to Bhaṭṭa seeing that the latter at the bidding of his master defeated the king of the Deccan', Bhaṭṭa probably helped Mahīpāla in driving out the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III, the king of the Deccan. Bhaṭṭa was succeeded by his son Bālāditya, also known as Bālārka and Bālabhānu. Bālāditya's queen was Raṭṭava, the daughter of king Śivarāja of the Chāhamāna family. She gave birth to three sons Vallabharāja, Vigraharāja, and Devarāja. Bālāditya erected a temple of Vishṇu.[83] Nothing further is known of this family.

V. THE TOMARAS

The Tomaras, who have occasionally been referred to above, are

82 *IHQ*, XIII, pp. 482 ff.
83 *Ibid.*, X, pp. 615 ff.

described by the bards of the late period as one of the thirty-six Rājput clans. An inscription[84] of the thirteenth century relates that the land of Hariyāṇaka was first ruled by the Tomaras, then by the Chauhāns, and then by the Śakas (Muslims). Another inscription,[85] which belongs to the early part of the fourteenth century, states that the Tomaras built the city of Ḍhillikā (Delhi) situated in the country of Hariyāṇa, and that after the Tomaras ruled the Chāhamānas and the *Mlechchha* Sahāvādina (Shihab-ud-Dīn Muhammad Ghori). It is known from other sources that the Delhi region was under the sway of Chāhamānas of Ajmer from whom it was wrested by Muhammad Ghori. So the report of the above two inscriptions that the Tomaras built Ḍhillikā and ruled the Hariyāṇa country may be accepted as authentic, though there is no contemporary evidence to connect them with that historic city. The tradition relating that Delhi was founded by the Tuārs (Tomaras) in V. S. 792 (A.D. 736) seems to have little historical value.

The history of the Tomaras of Delhi cannot be reconstructed in the absence of reliable evidence. The bards relate that Anaṅgapāla, the last Tomara king of Delhi, abdicated his throne in favour of his daughter's son Prithvīrāja (A.D. 1179-92) of the Chauhan dynasty of Ajmer. This statement cannot be accepted in view of the fact that Prithvīrāja inherited Delhi from his father Someśvara.

There are some stray references proving that the Tomaras were a ruling dynasty during this period. The earliest mention of the Tomaras is found in the Pehowa inscription[86] of the reign of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla I (A.D. 892-909). It states that the 'king (*rājā*) Jāula of the Tomara race obtained prosperity looking after the affairs of a king'. In his family was born Vajraṭa. The period of Jāula's reign cannot be ascertained. He and his immediate successors seem to have occupied the position of subordinate chiefs. Vajraṭa was succeeded by his son Jajjuka, who had three sons Gogga, Pūrṇarāja and Devarāja. Gogga, who succeeded his father, is referred to as a *bhūnātha* (lord of the earth). He and his two brothers Pūrṇarāja and Devarāja built at Prithūdaka (Pehowa, in the Karnal district, Haryana) on the bank of the Sarasvatī, three temples of Vishṇu during the reign of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla I. Gogga was apparently a feudatory of Mahendrapāla, and the country round Pehowa was in all probability within his kingdom. Kielhorn thinks that these Tomara princes were connected with Delhi. They might not have had any control over Pehowa, a famous place of pilgrimage, where many people from differ-

84 *JASB*, XLIII, pp. 104 ff.
85 *EI*, I, pp. 93 ff.
86 *Ibid.*, pp. 242 ff.

ent parts of India founded religious establishments. As Gogga, a contemporary of Mahendrapāla I, must have been ruling in the closing years of the ninth century, his grandfather Vajraṭa may be assumed to have flourished in the middle of that century. Nothing is known of the princes who succeeded Gogga. In the tenth century the Tomaras came into conflict with the Chāhamānas of Śākambharī. A Tomara chief named Rudreṇa lost his life in a battle with the Chāhamāna Chandanarāja II, son of Guvāka II of Śākambharī[87]. A Tomara leader (*nāyaka*) named Salavaṇa (?) suffered a defeat at the hands of Chandanarāja II's grandson Siṁharāja, who flourished in the third quarter of the tenth century.[88] A large number of Salavaṇa's army fell captive in the hands of the victor. The Tomara dynasty of Delhi was overthrown by the Chāhamānas under Vigraharāja Vīsāladeva in the middle of the twelfth century A.D.

87 *EI*, II, p. 121.

88 *Ibid.*, p. 116; some are inclined to interpret *Salavaṇa* as 'togethe

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

THE FOUR MAJOR DYNASTIES

I. THE KALACHURIS

1. *The Kalachuris of Ḍāhala*

THE Ḍāhala country, also known as Chedi, was situated to the east of Mālava. Its capital was Tripurī, modern village of Tewar, 6 miles from Jabbalpur, in the Madhya Pradesh. In the early years of the ninth century A.D. Ḍāhala was conquered by the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III, who handed it over to one of his servants for administration.[1] In A.D. 841-42 it was ruled by one Lakshmaṇarāja,[2] whose relation with the Rāshṭrakūṭas, or with the Kalachuri Kokalla I[2a] who followed him, is not known. Kokalla I is said to have been a member of the Sahasrārjuna family. Some are inclined to place his reign in the early years of the tenth century A.D., on the assumption that Harsha, mentioned as an adversary of Kokalla I, was the Chandella king of this name, who ruled from *c.* A.D. 900 to 925. But the error of this view is proved by the Cambay plate of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda IV which gives the following genealogy of Kokalla I and his descendants:-

Kokalla I
|
Arjuna
|
Ammana
|
Vijāmbā-married to Indra III (A.D. 915)
|
Amoghavarsha II — Govinda IV (A.D. 918)

1 *EI*, XVIII, Sañjan Plate.

2 *EI*, XXIII, p. 255.

2a The name is also spelt as Kokkala and Kokalla.

As Govinda IV dethroned his elder brother Amoghavarsha II in A.D. 918, he was certainly mature in age at that time. He may, therefore, be tentatively taken to have been at least 25 years old, and his elder brother, not less than 27. This places the date of Amoghavarsha II's birth approximately in or before A.D. 891. As his mother Vijāmbā must have been at least 14 years old at this time, she was born before A.D. 877. Even if each of Kokalla I, Arjuna, and Ammana is assumed to have had his first child when he was at least 20 years old, Kokalla I must have been born in or before A.D. 817. This is the latest possible date of Kokalla's birth, though he was in all likelihood born much earlier. The poet Rājaśekhara, who flourished in the early part of the tenth century A.D., was a contemporary of Yuvarāja I, the grandson of Kokalla I, and the fourth ruler of the dynasty. This also shows that Kokalla I flourished long before the beginning of the tenth century A.D. This conclusion is further confirmed by the Maliyapūṇḍi grant of the Eastern Chālukya Amma II (A.D. 945-70), which states that the Chālukya Guṇaga-Vijayāditya III (A.D. 848-92) defeated Śaṅkila (Śaṅkaragaṇa), the king of Ḍāhala. This proves that Śaṅkaragaṇa, the son of Kokalla I, succeeded to the throne of his father some time before A.D. 892. Kokalla I may therefore be taken to have flourished in the middle of the ninth century A.D., and the date of his accession may be fixed approximately at A.D. 845.[3]

Kokalla I was a military leader of a high order. The Bilhari inscription[4] states that 'having conquered the whole earth, he (Kokalla I) set up two unprecedented columns of his fame,—in the quarter of the pitcher-born (Agastya) (i.e., in the south) that well-known Kṛishṇarāja, and in the quarter of Kuvera (north), Bhojadeva, a store of fortune'. The Benares copper-plate[5] states that 'the hand of Kokalla I 'granted freedom from fear to Bhoja, Vallabharāja, Harsha, king of Chitrakūṭa, and Śaṅkaragaṇa.' Kṛishṇa of the Bilhari inscription is identical with Vallabha of the Benares plate. Kielhorn rightly identifies Bhoja with the Pratihāra Bhoja I of Kanauj, and Kṛishṇa with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II of the Deccan. R. D. Banerji's suggestion that Bhoja, referred to above, is the Pratihāra Bhoja II, is not tenable in view of the fact that Kokalla I closed his reign long before the accession of Bhoja II. The statements of the Bilhari and Benares inscriptions have been interpreted to mean that Kokalla I was an ally of Bhoja, Kṛishṇa II, Harsha and Śaṅkaragaṇa, the reference being

3 For detailed discussion cf. *IHQ*, XIII, pp. 482 ff; also *HCIP*, IV, p. 87.

4 *EI*, I, p. 264.

5 *Ibid.*, II, p. 306.

to Kokalla I's assistance to Bhoja against the Pālas of Bengal, and to Krishṇa II against the Eastern Chālukya Guṇaga-Vijayāditya III. Harsha of the Benares plate is taken to have been the king of Chitrakūṭa and is identified with the Chandella Harsha of Bundelkhand. Śaṅkaragaṇa is assumed to have been identical with the king of this name, who belonged to the Gorakhpur branch of the Kalachuri dynasty.

The assumption that Kokalla I acted as an ally of Bhoja, Krishṇa II, Harsha and Śaṅkaragaṇa appears to be erroneous. As pointed out above, Vijayāditya III came into conflict with Krishna II during the reign of Kokalla I's son Śaṅkaragaṇa. The Amoda plate[6] of the Kalachuri Prithvīdeva, dated A.D. 1079, states that 'Kokalla raided treasuries of the Karṇāṭa, Vaṅga, Gurjara, Koṅkaṇa, and Śākambhari kings, and also of those born of the Turushka and Raghu families'. The Karṇāṭa king, referred to above, must be identified with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa II. The Raghu family[7] can confidently be taken as identical with the Pratihāra dynasty of which Bhoja of the Bilhari and Benares inscriptions was a member.

The Nilgund inscription states that the Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III defeated the Gurjaras, who dwelt in the hill fort of Chitrakūṭa. Chitrakūṭa, which is identified with Chitor, in Mewar, was not under the sway of the Guhilas of Nāgahrada during that period. The king of the Gurjaras, referred to in the Amoda plate, may very reasonably be taken to have been connected with Chitrakūṭa, and in that case Chitor was included within Kokalla's kingdom. Harsha and the Chitrakūṭa-*bhūpāla*, mentioned in the Benares plate, need not necessarily be identical, and the latter might have been a different king whose name has not been mentioned. Even if Harsha be assumed to have been the ruler of Chitrakūṭa, his identity with the Chandella Harsha cannot be established, for Chitrakūṭa in Bundelkhand was outside the kingdom of the Chandellas, at least up to A.D. 954. It has already been noticed that there is chronological difficulty in accepting Kokalla I as a contemporary of the Chandella Harsha. There was a chief named Harsha, who belonged to the Chatsu branch of the Guhila dynasty, and who was a feudatory of the Pratihāra Bhoja I. It was perhaps this Guhila Harsha who shared with Bhoja a defeat at the hands of Kokalla I.

An attempt may be made to identify the other chiefs referred to in the Amoda plate, who fell victims to Kokalla's attack. The king of

6 *Ibid.*, XIX, p. 78.

7 The Pratihāra king Mahīpāla I is described as belonging to the Raghu family (above p. 640).

Konkaṇa seems to have been the Śilāhāra Kapardin II, and the king of Vanga was probably Trailokyachandra or his son Śrīchandra of the Chandra dynasty of Vikramapura (Bengal). The Turushkas were most probably the Arabs of Sindh. All these conquests made by Kokalla I raised the Kalachuris to the rank of the Imperial dynasties of this age.[8]

Kokalla I married Naṭṭādevī of the Chandella family, probably the daughter of king Jayaśakti, and had eighteen sons[9] and one daughter, who was given in marriage to the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II.[10] Śankaragaṇa, the eldest son, succeeded him on the throne, and the other princes were made rulers of provinces (*maṇḍalas*) Kokalla I ruled at least up to A.D. 878 the date of the accession of Kṛishṇa II, and closed his reign before A.D. 888 when, as noted above, Śankaragaṇa was on the throne.

Śankaragaṇa assumed the titles *Raṇavigraha*, *Mugdhatuṅga*, and *Prasiddhadhavala*. He invaded the kingdom of the ruler of Kosala, who seem to have been a Somavaṁśī king, and wrested from him Pāli, 12 miles north-east of Ratanpur, in the Bilaspur district, Madhya Pradesh.[11] He was in friendly relation with his brother-in-law, the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa II. Some time before A.D. 888 when the Deccan was invaded by the Eastern Chālukya king Guṇaga-Vijayāditya III, Kṛishṇa II sought his military help. Śankaragaṇa with his forces joined the Rāshṭrakūṭa army and encamped at Kiraṇapura, identified with Kiranpur, a small town in the Balaghat district, to check the further progress of the Eastern Chālukyas. But the allied army was forced to retreat and Kiraṇapura was burnt by the victors.[12] Śankaragaṇa is said to have reached the Malaya hill in the neighbourhood of the Kerala country or the Malabar coast with his army.[13] He probably led this military campaign as an ally of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The claim made in the Bilhari inscription that Śankaragaṇa 'conquered the lines of the country by the shore of the eastern sea'[14] cannot be verified. Śankaragaṇa had two sons, Bālaharsha and Yuvarāja I, and two daughters Lakshmīdevī and Govindāmbā. Both these princesses were married to the Rāshṭrakūṭa Jagattuṅga, son of Kṛishṇa II.[15] Lakshmīdevī's son was the Rāshṭrakūṭa emperor Indra III.

8 (For a different view of the conquests of Kokalla, cf. Ed.)
9 *EI*, I, p. 32.
10 *IA*, XII, pp. 250, 265.
11 *EI*, I, pp. 256, 265. see above, Ch. XVII, section II 2, p. 490.
12 Author's *Eastern Chālukyas*, cf. above, Ch. XVII, section IV 3, p. 512.
13 *EI*, I, p. 265.
14 *Ibid.*
15 *IA*, XII, pp. 265 ff.

Saṅkaragaṇa was succeeded by Bālaharsha, and the latter by Yuvarāja I, who assumed the title Keyūravarsha, and flourished in the second quarter of the tenth century A.D. He led a successful expedition against Gauḍa or North Bengal, which was at that time under the rule of the Pāla Rājyapala or his successor Gopāla II (p. 679). He next invaded Kaliṅga and won a victory over its ruler, who probably belonged to the Gaṅga dynasty.[16] A Khajuraho inscription states that the Chandella Yaśovarman (*c.* A.D. 925-50) defeated the Chedis.[17] Yaśovarman's adversary seems to have been Yuvarāja I. Yuvarāja gave his daughter Kundakadevī in marriage to the Rāshṭrakūṭa Amoghavarsha III (*c.* A.D. 933-39).[18] The issue of this marriage was Kṛishṇa III, who ascended the throne in A.D. 939. Notwithstanding this close relationship the Rāshṭrakūṭas and the Kalachuris entered into a terrible conflict during this period. The Karhad inscription of Kṛishṇa III, dated A.D. 959, states that he conquered Sahasrārjuna, though he was an elderly relative of his mother and of his wife.[19] The Jura stone inscription proves that Kṛishṇa III made himself master of all the countries, at least up to Maihar, in Baghelkhand.[20] This shows that the Ḍāhala country also passed into his hand. Kṛishṇa III's adversary was in all probability Yuvarāja I, who, however, succeeded in reconquering Ḍāhala within a very short time. The Bilhari inscription mentions Yuvarāja's victory over the Karṇāṭas, i.e., the Rāshṭrakūṭas, [21] and Rājaśekhara probably refers to it when he states that 'Yuvarāja I won a victory over Vallabha, who formed a confederacy with other chiefs.'[22] This was no doubt an outstanding achievement of Yuvarāja, to celebrate which Rājaśekhara staged a drama before the Kalachuri king.

Yuvarāja I is associated with the religious activities of the Śaivas in Ḍāhala. A Śaiva teacher Durvāsa founded a monastery there known as *Golakimaṭha*. A remote successor of Durvāsa in the position of the high priest of that monastery was Sadbhāvaśambhu, who received from Yuvarāja I as donation a large number of villages for its maintenance. The Chālukya Avanivarman, who lived in the city of Mattamayūra, was the father of Yuvarāja I's queen Nohalā. At the request of this Chālukya chief a Śaiva teacher named Purandara

16 *EI*, I, pp. 265 ff.
17 *Ibid.*, pp. 126-28.
18 *IA*, XII, p. 268.
19 *EI*, IV, p. 288. (But this interpretation is not accepted by all, cf. *JOR*, XVI, p. 155. Ed.).
20 *MASI*, no. 23, pp. 11, 117.
21 *EI*, II, p. 265.
22 *Viddhaśālabhañjikā*, *IHQ*, XVII, p. 118.

founded there a monastery. Prabhāvaśiva, a member of this monastery, went to Ḍāhala at the invitation of Yuvarāja I, who made him the chief of a monastery which he built in his own kingdom and to which he granted lands for its maintenance. Some are inclined to think that the ruins of a monastery at Chandrehi, 29 miles south of Rewa, Baghelkhand, represent that ancient monastery. Yuvarāja I is also known to have built a magnificent temple of Śiva at Gurgi, 12 miles east of the town of Rewa, the ruins of which can still be seen. The queen Nohalā founded a temple at Bilhari, in the Jabbalpur district, and granted seven villages for its maintenance.[23]

The great poet Rājaśekhara, who lived under the patronage of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla and Mahīpāla of Kanauj, was also associated with the court of Tripurī during the reigns of Śaṅkaragaṇa and Yuvarāja I. He remarks that 'of rivers the Mekalasutā, of kings Raṇavigraha, and of poets Surānanda are the ornaments of the country of Chedi'.[24] He composed his drama *Viddhaśālabhañjikā* to celebrate Yuvarāja I's victory over the Rāshṭrakūṭas. 'The wonder-struck poet Rājaśekhara', mentioned in the Bilhari inscription,[25] evidently refers to him.

Yuvarāja was succeeded by his son Lakshmaṇarāja whose reign may be placed in the third quarter of the tenth century A.D. He also won laurels in a number of military campaigns against countries both far and near. On the east he reached Vaṅgāla and defeated its king, who was either Trailokya-chandra or his son Śrī-chandra of the Chandra dynasty of Vikramapura. During that campaign Lakshmaṇarāja seems to have come in contact with the king of Oḍra, who handed over to him an effigy of the serpent Kāliya, wrought with jewels and gold. Lakshmaṇarāja also won a victory over the king of Kosala, who was apparently the Somavamśī king Mahābhava-gupta, son of Śiva-gupta (above, p. 491). He also invaded the western region and defeated the king of Lāṭa, who seems to have been a vassal of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of the Deccan. After achieving victory over the Gurjara king, who appears to have been the Chaulukya Mūlarāja I, he proceeded to Somanātha. He offered his prayer to the god with golden lotuses, and presented to him the effigy of Kāliya, which he had obtained from the king of Oḍra. The statement of the Goharwa inscription of Karṇa that Lakshmaṇarāja defeated the kings of Pāṇḍya and Kāshmir seems to be a hyperbole.[26]

23 *MASI*, no. 23.
24 *EI*. IV, p. 280.
25 *Ibid.*, I, p. 270.
26 *IHQ*, XIX, pp. 297 ff.; *EI*. I, p. 268; XI, p. 142.

Lakshmaṇarāja was also like his father sympathetic towards the Śaivas. He appointed the Śaiva teacher Hṛidayaśiva the chief of the monastery of the holy Vaidyanātha, near Bilhari.[27] His minister Bhaṭṭa Someśvara Dīkshita built a temple of Vishṇu at Karitalai, in the Jabbalpur district, and Lakshmaṇarāja, his queen and his son Śaṅkaragaṇa made donations for its maintenance. Besides Śaṅkaragaṇa, Lakshmaṇarāja had another son Yuvarāja II. He gave his daughter Bonthādevī in marriage to the Chālukya Vikramāditya IV, whose son Taila II is known to have served the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III as a feudatory in Tardavāḍi, in the Dharwar district, in A.D. 958.[28] Lakshmaṇarāja was succeeded by his son Śaṅkaragaṇa II, who was a devotee of Vishṇu. Śaṅkaragaṇa II ruled for a short period and was succeeded by Yuvarāja II.

Yuvarāja II ruled in the last quarter of the tenth century. The Bilhari inscription, which has been mentioned above, seems to have been issued during his reign. Yuvarāja is said to have purified Tripurī, which looked like the city of Indra. He fought a severe battle with the Paramāra Muñja of Mālava in defence of his realm, but having failed to resist the invader, fled away. Muñja killed a number of Kalachuri generals and made a triumphant march to Tripurī. After the withdrawal of the Paramāras from Ḍāhala the ministers of the country placed Yuvarāja II's son Kokalla II on the throne,[29] some time before A.D. 998.

2. *The Kalachuris of Sarayūpāra*

A minor branch of the Kalachuri dynasty ruled in Sarayūpāra, i.e., the bank of the Sarayū river (the Gogra in U.P.) from the eighth century A.D.[30] Rājaputra, the earliest known chief of this line is stated to have seized in battle the Turaga-pati Vāhali, snatched away the fame of Kiriṭīn and other princes and defeated the lord of the kings of Prāchī (east). The identity of Vāhali and Kirīṭin cannot be established, but the lord of the kings of the east seems to have been Dharmapāla of Bengal with whom he probably fought as a vassal of a Pratihāra king. Rājaputra was succeeded by his son Śivarāja I, whose son and successor Śaṅkaragaṇa appears to have suffered a defeat at the hands of the Kalachuri Kokalla I (above. pp 707-8). Śaṅkaragaṇa's son and successor Guṇāmbhodhideva, also known as Guṇasāgara (I) is described as having fought successfully

27 *MASI*, no. 23, p. 46.
28 *BG*. I, pt. II, p. 427.
29 Author's *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*.
30 Kalha plates, *EI*, VII, p. 85.

with the king of Gauḍa. It seems that he joined the Pratihāra Bhoja in the latter's fight with the Pāla Devapāla. Bhoja granted him some territories, probably in recognition of this service. Guṇāmbhodhideva had two sons Ullabha and Bhāmānadeva, who ascended the throne one after the other after his death. Bhāmānadeva is credited with a victory over the king of Dhārā, the capital of Mālava. He seems to have fought against the Paramāra Vairisiṁha II on behalf of the Pratihāra Mahīpāla I, whose son Mahendrapāla II is known to have been in possession of Mālava. After Bhāmānadeva, the throne was successively occupied by Śaṅkaragaṇa II, Mugdhatuṅga, Guṇasāgara II, Śivarāja II, Bhāmāna, Śaṅkaragaṇa III, and Bhīma, each of whom was the son of his predecessor. In the early part of the eleventh century A.D. Bhīma was deprived of his sovereignty by an unknown enemy, and in A.D. 1031 Vyāsa, son of Guṇasāgara II, was placed on the throne. Vyāsa's son *Mahārājādhirāja* Soḍhadeva, known to have been ruling in A.D. 1079, is the last known king of the dynasty, and his kingdom extended from the Gogra to the Gandak.

II. THE CHANDELLAS

The Chandellas, also known as the Chandrātreyas, claim their descent from the sage Chandrātreya, the son of the Moon, who was born of the eye of the sage Atri.[31] The *Mahoba-khaṇḍa* of Chand Bardai[32] relates that Chandravarmā was born of Chandramā, the Moon-god and the maid Hemavatī, the daughter of the priest of the Gaharwar *rājā* of Benares. He was taken to Khajurāho, founded a dynasty at Mahoba in Sam 225, and also built the hill-fort of Kālañjara. Cunningham refers the date of the accession of Chandravarmā to the Harsha era, corresponding to A.D. 831. The traditional stories of the origin of the Chandellas do not seem to have any historical foundation. Smith's suggestion[33] that the Chandellas were Hinduised Gonds also does not carry much weight.[34] The bards mention the Chandellas as one of the thirty-six Rājput clans and they are of the same caste as the Chāhamānas.[35]

Nannuka, who is described as born in the lineage of Chandrātreya in the Khajurāho inscription, was apparently the founder of the family.[36] The epigraphic records connect the founder of the family

31 *EI*. I, p. 120.

32 Cunningham, *ASR*. II, p. 445.

33 *IA*, 1908, XXXVII, p. 114.

34 The names like *Nannuka* or *Kokkalla* may suggest non-Aryan origin, though this cannot be treated as a definite evidence (Editor).

35 *EI*, I, p. 132, v. 21.

36 *Ibid*., p. 126.

with Khajurāho, ancient Kharjuravāhaka, in the old Chhatarpur State, Madhya Pradesh, and Nannuka may be assumed to have first settled there. As Dhaṅga, sixth in descent from Nannuka, ascended the throne in *c.* A.D. 950, Nannuka may have flourished in the first half of the ninth century. This supports Cunningham's suggestion that the traditional date (*Saṁ* 256) of the foundation of the Chandella kingdom is to be referred to the Harsha era. It is not unlikely that Nannuka bore another name Chandravarmā.

As the kingdom of the Pratihāras extended, during this period, at least up to Deogarh in the Jhansi district and Kālañjara in the Banda district, U.P., nearly 40 miles north-east of Khajurāho, it is likely that the early Chandella rulers were feudatories of the imperial Pratihāras. Nannuka's son and successor, Vākpati, who probably flourished in the second quarter of the ninth century A.D., is said to have made the Vindhya region his pleasure ground.[37] The Vindhya region was also raided by the Pāla Devapāla, the Pratihāra Bhoja, and the Kalachuri Kokalla I, all of whom were apparently contemporaries of Vākpati. The political relation of Vākpati with these rulers is difficult to determine. Vākpati had two sons, Jayaśakti (also known as Jejjaka and Jeja) and Vijayaśakti (also known as Vijjaka), both of whom may be assigned to the third quarter of the ninth century A.D. Jayaśakti, who succeeded his father, appears to have been a king of great renown, as the country round Khajurāho was known from this time as Jejakabhukti after him.[38] About this time a Chandella princess named Naṭṭā was given in marriage to the Kalachuri Kokalla I.[39] The princess may have been the daughter of Jayaśakti or his successor Vijayaśakti. The Khajurāho inscription relates that Vijayaśakti reached the southernmost point of India in course of conquest.[40] As has been suggested above (p. 666) Vijayaśakti probably joined Devapāla of Bengal in his expedition against the Drāviḍa country.[41] Vijayaśakti's son and successor is Rāhila. A village, 2 miles south-west of Mahoba, in the Hamirpur district, U.P., is called Rahilya, and a tank there is known as Rahilya-sāgara. Local tradition relates that the tank is named after Rāhilyavarman, who excavated it.[42] It is not unlikely that Rāhilyavarman is identical with the King Rāhila,

37 *Ibid.*

38 *Ibid.*, p. 221. But, if, as Cunningham suggests (*Ancient Geography of India*, p. 481), Hiuen Tsang's Chih-Chi-T'o is equivalent to Jajati, Jejabhukti or Jejakabhukti), the name must have been current before the time of Jayaśakti (Ed).

39 *Ibid.*, II, p. 306.

40 *Ibid.*, I, p. 138.

41 *HBR*, I, p. 119 n. 4.

42 Cunningham, *ASR*, II, p. 441.

referred to above. If the king Rāhila is really the founder of the tank it will prove that Mahoba was within the kingdom of the Chandellas during this period. Rāhila was succeeded by his son Harsha, who may be assumed to have flourished in the first quarter of the tenth century A.D. It appears from a fragmentary inscription found[43] at Khajurāho that either Harsha or his son Yaśovarman re-instated a king named Kshitipāladeva on the throne. Kielhorn is inclined to identify the Chandella king with Harsha and Kshitipāla with the Pratihāra king of this name, who was also known as Mahīpāla I. It has been suggested above (p. 642) that Harsha probably helped Mahīpāla I in regaining his throne of Kanauj when it was captured by the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III. Some are inclined to identify Harsha, who was granted freedom from fear by the Kalachuri Kokalla I, with the Chandella king of this name. But as suggested above, this Harsha, is probably the king of this name belonging to the Chatsu branch of the Guhila dynasty. The Chandella Harsha married a princess of the Chāhamāna dynasty named Kañchukā.[44] She probably belonged to the feudatory Chāhamāna family, which was ruling in the Mālava region about this time. Harsha was succeeded by his son Yaśovarman, who bore another name Lakshavarman.

The Chandellas acquired more political power during the reign of Yaśovarman, who flourished in the second quarter of the tenth century and took full advantage of the decline of the Pratihāras. The Khajurāho inscription of Dhaṅga narrates[45] vividly the extensive conquests made by Yaśovarman though, of course, with a touch of poetic imagination. The most outstanding achievement of Yaśovarman was his conquest and annexation of Kālañjara. The place was for some time under the occupation of the Pratihāras, who had to surrender it to the Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III. Yaśovarman seems to have wrested it from that Rāshṭrakūṭa chief. Henceforward Kālañjara became the military headquarters of the Chandellas. Yaśovarman gradually conquered all the territories up to the Yamunā without much difficulty. His army is said to have encamped on the banks of the Yamunā and Gaṅgā in the course of their march for conquest. The Khajurāho inscription further states that Yaśovarman was, as it were, 'a scorching fire to the Gurjaras'. The Gurjaras are identified by some with the Pratihāras of Kanauj. But the same Khajurāho inscription refers to Vināyakapāla in such a way as to imply that the Chandellas still owed allegiance to that Pratihāra emperor. So the identification

43 *EI*, I, p. 122.
44 *Ibid.*, p. 126.
45 *Ibid.*

of the Gurjaras mentioned in the Khajurāho inscription with the Pratihāras of Kanauj may not be regarded as conclusive.[46]

From the banks of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, Yaśovarman led his army against Bengal and Bihar then ruled by the Pālas. It is stated that the king put the Gauḍas to sword and reduced the strength of the Mithilas (people of North Bihar). Yaśovarman is further described as having subdued the Khasas,[47] the Kāshmiri warriors, and the Kurus; and also led his army to the Himalayas along the bank of the Gaṅgā. During this period the throne of Kāshmir was occupied by the kings Yaśaskara, Saṁgrāmadeva and Pravaragupta in succession, and the Khasas were in possession of Lohara, modern Lorin, in Kāshmir. Kurukshetra seems to have been under the sway of the Tomaras of Delhi. It may be reasonably doubted whether Yaśovarman really defeated these rulers and went as far as the Panjab or the Himalayan region in the course of his conquest.

Adjoining to the kingdom of the Chandellas were Mālava, ruled at that time by the Paramāra Siyaka II as a vassal of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and the country of Chedi, also known as Ḍāhala, which was then administered by the Kalachuri Yuvarāja I. Yaśovarman is said to have fought successfully with the ruler of both these countries. In course of his southern campaign Yaśovarman invaded the Kosala country, which was about this time under the sway of the Somavaṁsis, and plundered it. Yaśovarman was undoubtedly a king of great power though he acknowledged the nominal sway of the Pratihāras of Kanauj. His military exploits, however, could not secure for him any territory beyond the Yamunā on the north and the borders of the Mālava and the Chedi countries on the south.

Yaśovarman built a magnificent temple of Vishṇu, which is identified with the Chaturbhuj temple of Khajurāho, where he installed an image of Vaikuṇṭha. The Khajurāho inscription states that the king of Bhoṭa obtained this image of Vaikuṇtha from Kailāsa, and presented it to Sāhi, the king of Kīra, who in his turn, gave it to Herambapāla for a force of elephants and horses. Yaśovarman obtained it from the Hayapati Devapāla, son of Herambapāla.[48] This Devapāla is identified with the Pratihāra king of this name, who is known to have been ruling in A.D. 948. Yaśovarman had two sons Dhaṅga who succeeded him on the throne, and Kṛishṇapa.[49]

The dates of Dhaṅga's inscriptions range from A.D. 954 to 1002.[50]

46 Author's *The Pratihāras and the Gurjaras*, *JBORS*, XXIV.
47 *IHQ*, XXV, p. 213.
48 *EI*, I, p. 134.
49 *IA*, XVIII, p. 236.
50 *EI*, I, pp. 123-52; *IA*. XVI, p. 201.

As noted above, Dhaṅga probably acknowledged the supremacy of the Pratihāra Vināyakapāla at least up to A.D. 954, the date of the Khajurāho inscription. Dhaṅga and his successors took pride in describing themselves as lords of Kālañjara. At this time the Chandella kingdom extended 'as far as Bhāsvat (Bhilsa) situated on the bank of the river of Mālava; from here to the bank of the river Kālindī (Yamunā), and from here also to the frontiers of the Chedi country (Jabbalpur region) and even as far as that mountain called Gopa (Gwalior)'.[51] Thus in the early years of Dhaṅga's reign Gwalior, Yamunā, Kālañjara, and the northern border of the Jabbalpur region were the extreme limits of the Chandella kingdom. The credit for this wide expansion of the Chandella kingdom does not entirely belong to Dhaṅga, for Yaśovarman was in possession of at least the major portion of it. Dhaṅga could not, however, retain his hold over Gwalior for a long time. The Kachchhapaghāta Vajradāman defeated him and his suzerain lord the Pratihāra king of Kanauj, who was possibly Vijayapāla, and wrested Gwalior from him.[52] It is stated that Vajradāman defeated the ruler of Gādhinagara (Kanauj) and conquered Gopādri or Gwalior. As Dhaṅga is known to have been in possession of Gwalior about this time, it is obvious that he was forced to surrender the place to the invader, though he was reinforced by the army of his overlord. A stone inscription of the *Mahārājādhirāja* Vajradāman,[53] dated A.D. 977, has been found at Gwalior. The defeat of the Pratihāras at the hands of the Kachchhapaghātas gave a death blow to their prestige as an imperial power in Northern India, and Dhaṅga was not slow to take advantage of this. He invaded the eastern part of the Pratihāra empire and wrested all the territories from Benares to Allahabad.[54] The fact of his victory over the king of Kanauj in the battle-field is recorded in a Chandella inscription.[55] The Nanyur inscription[56] of his reign was issued from Kāśikā, which is a synonym for Vārāṇasī. As Dhaṅga is said to have died at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, Allahabad was apparently within his kingdom. These territories were evidently acquired by Dhaṅga after A.D. 954, the date of the Khajurāho inscription, mentioned above. The extension of the Chandella kingdom up to Benares seems to have encouraged Dhaṅga to lead his army against

51 *EI*, I, p, 129.
52 *IA*, XV, p. 36.
53 *JASB*, XXXI, p. 393.
54 *IA*, XVI, p. 201; *EI*, I, p. 146; V, p. 55.
55 *EI*, I, p. 197.
56 *IA*, XVI, p. 201.

Bihar and Bengal, for he is said to have conquered Aṅga and Rāḍha.[57] Aṅga or Bhagalpur was under the sway of the Pāla king Vigrahapāla II or his son Mahīpāla I. Daṇḍabhukti was ruled by the Kāmbojas at this time. In the first quarter of the tenth century a king named Raṇaśūra was on the throne of southern Rāḍha. Dhaṅga's adversary in Rāḍha was either a chief of the Kāmboja dynasty or a predecessor of Raṇaśūra. The great political changes that took place in the Deccan after the fall of the Rāshṭrakūṭas tempted Dhaṅga to lead an expedition into that country. It is stated that he defeated the king of Kuntala,[58] who is to be identified either with a successor of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III or the Chālukya Taila II. It was probably on that occasion that Dhaṅga raided the countries of the Somavaṁśīs of Kosala and the Eastern Chālukyas of the Andhra country.[59] The statement that Dhaṅga won victories over the kings of Kāñchī and Siṁhala seems to be a hyperbole.[60]

Ferishta[61] relates that when the Shāhi king Jaipāl sought the help of the chiefs of Northern India against the incursions of the Amir Sabuktigin, the king of Kālañjara was one of those who responded to this appeal. In the battle that took place near Lamghan the Indian chiefs suffered a heavy defeat. The battle took place about A.D. 989, when Dhaṅga was the king of Kālañjara. Doubts have been expressed as to the authenticity of the report supplied by Ferishta as it does not occur in the works of the early Muslim historians. But that Dhaṅga came in conflict with some Muslim invaders may be inferred from a Chandella inscription[62] which records that Dhaṅga 'by the strength of his arms equalled even the powerful Hamvīra'. Hamvīra is a corruption of the word Amir, a title borne by the chiefs of the Yamini dynasty of Ghazni. So it is not altogether unlikely that Dhaṅga sent an army to help Jaipāl against the Yaminis.

Dhaṅga deserves great credit for raising his family to the rank of one of the most powerful ruling dynasties of Northern India. He was busy conducting military campaigns throughout his life and by the strength of his arms, he succeeded in pushing the northern boundary of the Chandella kingdom up to the bank of the Gaṅgā. He is said to have been adept in the abstruse conduct of politics.[63] He built a temple of Śiva at Khajurāho, and during his reign Kokalla of

57 *EI*, I, p. 145.
58 *Ibid.*
59 *Ibid.*
60 *Ibid.*
61 Briggs, I, p. 18.
62 *EI*, I, pp. 218, 221.
63 *Ibid.*, p. 199.

the Grahapati family erected the temple of Vaidyanātha also at Khajurāho.[64] He lived for more than hundred years and he is said to have died by plunging himself in the holy water at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā.[65] His long reign covered the second half of the tenth century and a few years beyond it.

III. THE PARAMĀRAS

The kingdom of the Chandellas bordered upon that of the Paramāras of Mālava on the south-west. As regards the origin of the Paramāra family, both the epigraphic records and the literature[66] of the period relate a legendary story. It is stated that the sage Vaśishṭha had a wish-granting cow (Kāmadhenu) which was stolen by his rival, the sage Viśvāmitra. Vaśishṭha needed the service of a general of power and strength who would be able to recover his cow. He dug a pit on Mt. Abu, kindled fire in it, and threw there an offering with some holy sayings for the fulfilment of his desire. A hero forthwith sprang out of the fire with bow, crown, and golden armour. He wrested the cow from Viśvāmitra and restored it to its original owner. In recognition of this service Vaśishṭha gave him the name Paramāra (Slayer of the enemy), and made him the ruler of the earth. In the family of this king was born Upendra, the earliest known king of the Paramāra dynasty. Though the story itself is a myth, it is assumed by some scholars that it suggests Mt. Abu as the original home of the dynasty.

The earliest known record to throw light on the history of the Paramāra dynasty is the Harsola grant,[67] dated A.D. 948. It relates that *Mahārājādhirāja* Akālavarsha Prithvīvallabha meditated upon the feet of *Mahārājādhirāja* Amoghavarshadeva. In the renowned family of that sovereign was born the (Paramāra) Vappavarāja (Vākpatirāja I). Akālavarsha and Amoghavarsha are identified respectively with the Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III and Amoghavarsha III. The inscription therefore discloses that the Paramāras were a branch of the Rāshṭrakūṭa family. The Rāshṭrakūṭa origin of the Paramāras is further suggested by the fact that Vākpati II, the founder of the greatness of the Paramāra dynasty, assumed the Rāshṭrakūṭa titles of Amoghavarsha, Śrīvallabha and Prithvīvallabha.[68] The original home of the Paramāras may thus be assumed to have been in the Deccan,

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 147.
65 *Ibid.*, p. 146.
66 *ASR*, II, p. 255; *EI*, I, p. 236.
67 *EI*, XIX, p. 237.
68 *IA*, VI, p. 51; XIV, p. 160.

which was the home dominion of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The epigraphic records help us in tracing the circumstances that led to the establishment of the sovereignty of the Paramāras in Mālava. Mālava was under the sway of the Pratihāras before the rise of the Paramāras. The Rāshṭrakūṭas of the Deccan were the hereditary enemies of the Pratihāras of Mālava. The Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III occupied the throne of the Deccan from A.D. 794 to 814. The Sañjan plate records that 'Govinda III... acquiring the Mālava country along with Kosala, Kaliṅga, Vaṅga (Veṅgī ?) Ḍāhala, and Oḍraka, made his servants enjoy them.' It is evident from the above statement of the Sañjan plate that Govinda III drove out that Mālava king, who is probably to be identified with Nāgabhaṭa II, from his ancestral dominion, and entrusted one of his vassals with the charge of the administration of Mālava. That Mālava formed a part of the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom about this time can also be gathered from the Baroda plate of Karkarāja, dated A.D. 812, which states that Govinda III took due precaution to protect the king of Mālava against the incursion of the Gurjaras. Nāgabhaṭa II made an attempt to recover Mālava, but succeeded in capturing only some outlying hill fortresses of the country. Upendra, as has already been noticed, is the earliest known king of the Paramāra dynasty. As Vākpati-Muñja, seventh in descent from Upendra, is known to have ascended the throne in A.D. 971-72. the period of Upendra's rule is to be placed in the first quarter of the ninth century. This was the period when Govinda III conquered Mālava and appointed one of his servants to rule it as his vassal. This ruler of Mālava appointed by Govinda III may, therefore, very reasonably be taken as identical with the Paramāra Upendra, probably a member of the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty of the Deccan.[69]

Upendra was also known as Krishṇarāja. His successors are occasionally referred to as the lords of Mālava and kings of Avanti. Dhārā, modern Dhar, was the capital of the family. Upendra had two sons, Vairisiṁha and Dambarasiṁha. Vairisiṁha I, who succeeded to the throne of his father, appears to have made over the province of Vāgada, the old states of Banswara and Dungarpur State, to his younger brother to rule.[70] Vairisiṁha is said to have erected pillars of victory in different parts of the earth, and some scholars

69 For detailed discussion cf. *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, pp. 10 ff. The view of D. C. Ganguly, given above, has been challenged by P. Bhatia (*The Paramāras*, Delhi, 1970, pp. 18 ff), but on very insufficient grounds. She dismisses the clear statement in the Harsola Grant as 'vague and stray reference' and attaches greater importance to the evidence of inscriptions and literary texts which speak of the Paramāras as born of the sacrificial fire (Editor).

70 *EI*, XIV, p. 296.

give him the credit of erecting the Iron Pillar at Dhar.[71] Vairisiṁha I was succeeded by his son Sīyaka I, whose son and successor was Vākpati I. Vākpati I is described as 'a sun for (those) water lilies, the eyes of the maidens of Avanti.'[72] This only proves Vākpati I's supremacy over Mālava. Vākpati I was succeeded by his son Vairisiṁha II, also known as Vajraṭa, who flourished in the second quarter of the tenth century A.D. Vairisiṁha and his predecessors were vassals of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of the Deccan. After the death of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III anarchy broke out in that kingdom. The Pratihāras of Kanauj, who were the hereditary enemies of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, were not slow to take advantage of the situation. Their king Mahīpāla I launched an expedition against the Rāshṭrakūṭas and won a victory. It was probably on that occasion that the Pratihāras inflicted a defeat on the Paramāra Vairisiṁha II and succeeded in capturing Mālava, which had been in their possession more than a century before and was wrested from them by the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The Pratihāras appointed a governor of their own to administer the newly acquired territory, and the sovereignty of the Paramāras there remained in abeyance at least up to A.D. 946. During this period the Paramāra Vairisiṁha II seems to have lived in exile somewhere in the Rāshṭrakūṭa kingdom. But the disintegration of the Pratihāra empire began after the death of Mahīpāla I. Some time before A.D. 949, Vairisiṁha II, taking advantage of the weakness of the Pratihāras, wrested Mālava from them, apparently with the help of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and re-established there the suzerainty of his family.[73] The Udaipur Praśasti[74] reports that after slaying his enemies Vairisiṁha II proved that Dhārā belonged to him. Vairisiṁha II was succeeded by his son Sīyaka II some time before A.D. 949.

Sīyaka II was also known as Harsha, while Merutuṅga calls him by the name Siṁhadantabhaṭa. Sīyaka II's inscription, dated A.D. 948 gives him the titles *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Mahāmaṇḍalikachūḍāmaṇi* and describes him as a vassal of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Krishṇa III Akālavarsha.[75] Sīyaka II was a great warrior. Shortly before A.D. 949 he, with the assistance of the ruler of Kheḍaka-maṇḍala (Kaira in Gujarat), led an expedition against Yogarāja, whose kingdom lay to the west of the Mahi.[76] This gives an idea of the extent of the Para-

71 *EI*, I, p. 237; *ASI*, AR, 1902-3, p. 207.
72 *EI*, I, p. 237.
73 *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, pp. 31-36.
74 *EI*, I, p. 235.
75 *Ibid.*, XIX, p. 242.
76 *Ibid.*

māra kingdom on the west at that time. Yogarāja is identified with the Chālukya Avanivarman II, also known as Yoga, who ruled in Kāthiāwār during that period.[77] Some time afterwards Sīyaka II invaded the country of the Hūṇas to the north-west of Mālava, and defeated their king.[78] His adversary there seems to have been a successor of the Hūṇa Jajjapa, who lost his life in a battle with the Chālukyas of Saurāshṭra. Sīyaka II fought successfully with the lord of Raḍupati,[79] who cannot be identified, but he had to suffer a defeat at the hands of the Chandella Yaśovarman.[80] In the latter part of his reign Sīyaka threw off the yoke of subordination to the Rāshṭrakūṭas and declared independence. At this time the Rāshṭrakūṭa Khoṭṭiga, brother and successor of Krishṇa III, was on the throne of the Deccan. Khoṭṭiga marched with his army towards Mālava in order to bring the rebel under his control. Sīyaka II, along with his kinsman Kaṅka of Vāgaḍa, opposed the Rāshṭrakūṭás at a place called Kalighaṭṭa on the Narmadā. The Rāshṭrakūṭas retreated after suffering a defeat, though Kaṅka lost his life in the battle.[81] Sīyaka II pursued Khoṭṭiga up to Mānyakheṭa, the capital of the Rashṭrakūṭas, and sacked the city. Dhanapāla's *Paiyalachchhi*[82] states that in Vikrama Samvat 1029 (A.D. 972) Mānyakheṭa was plundered in the course of an invasion by the lord of Mālava. The king of Mālava, referred to, was apparently Sīyaka II, as his victory over Khoṭṭiga has been mentioned in the Udaipur Praśasti.[83] Sīyaka II was eventually driven from Mānyakheṭa by the Rāshṭrakūṭas, who received substantial help on that occasion from the Gaṅga Mārasiṁha II. The Sravaṇa Belgola epigraph[84] reports that Mārasiṁha II 'by the strength of his arms protected the encampment of the emperor when it was located at the city of Mānyakheṭa.' Mārasiṁha ruled from A.D. 963 to 972, and apparently defended the Rāshṭrakūṭa capital when it was invaded by Sīyaka II. It was probably on that occasion that the southern boundary of the Paramāra kingdom was pushed up to the Tāpti. Sīyaka II deserves great credit for securing independent status for his family. His kingdom extended on the north up to the border of the old Jhalwar State, which was under the sway of the *Mahā-*

77 Cf. Ch. XXIV, § 2, p.

78 *Navasāhasāṅka-charita*, Sarga XI, v. 90; *EI*, IX, p. 8.

79 *Ibid.*, Sarga XI, v. 89, cf. *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, App. III.

80 *EI*, I, p. 134.

81 *ASI*, AR, 1916-17, Pt, I, p. 19, *EI*, XIV, p. 296.

82 Ed. Bühler, p. 6.

83 *EI*. I, p. 237.

84 *Ibid.*, V, p. 179.

rājādhirāja Chāmuṇḍarāja in A.D. 971. The poet Padmagupta relates that Sīyaka II 'clothed himself in the grass robe of a royal sage, and devoted himself to the practice of penance'.[85] It may be assumed from it that the king abdicated his throne in the latter part of his life and took to asceticism. His queen was Vaḍaja and he had two sons, Muñja and Sindhurāja. He was succeeded by Muñja some time between A.D. 970 and 973.

Muñja was also known as Vākpati and Utpala. Merutuṅga relates a story regarding his birth and accession. It is stated that Sīyaka II was without a child for many years. Once when he was on a tour in the countryside he suddenly came across a new-born child lying on the Muñja grass. He picked him up, gave him the name *Muñja,* reared him like his own son with great affection, and adopted him as his successor to the throne. Some time afterwards a son was born to the king, who gave him the name Sindhurāja. He, however, did not withdraw his affection from Muñja and adhered to his former decision regarding succession.[86]

Muñja was one of the greatest generals of his age. Shortly after his accession he devoted his energy to the further expansion of his kingdom at the cost of his neighbours. He led an expedition against the Kalachuris of Ḍāhala, defeated their king Yuvarāja II, and captured Tripurī, the capital of the country. His supremacy over the Ḍāhala country was, however, short-lived. The Kalachuris rallied their forces, compelled Muñja to withdraw from their country, and placed Kokalla II, son of Yuvarāja II, on the throne of Tripurī.[87] Muñja's military campaigns against his north-western neighbours were more fruitful. He invaded Medapāṭa (Mewar), defeated its king, who may be identified with the Guhila Śaktikumāra (A.D. 977), and plundered Āghāṭa (modern Ahar, near Udaipur railway station, Rajasthan), the capital of the country. The Guhila king saved his life on that occasion by taking shelter under the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dhavala of Hastikuṇḍi.[88] Muñja next invaded the kingdom of the Chāhamānas of Naḍḍula, and wrested from their king, Balirāja, Mt. Abu and the southern part of his dominion as far as Kiradu, which lies 16 miles north-west of Balmer, in the former Jodhpur State. The Kauthem grant[89] of the Chālukya Vikramāditya V states that at the ap-

85 *Navasāhasāṅka-charita,* Sarga XI, V. 88.
86 *Prabandhachintāmaṇi,* Eng. trans. Tawney, p. 30.
87 *EI,* I, p. 235, *IA,* XVI, p. 23; *EI,* II, p. 5.
88 *EI,* X, p. 20.
89 *IA,* XVI, p. 23.

proach of Utpala the people of Marwar trembled. Padmagupta[90] relates that Muñja's servants got a strong footing in Marwar. Muñja's attempt to conquer Naḍḍula was frustrated by Balirāja, who claims to have dispersed the army of the Mālava king.[91] Muñja divided the newly conquered territories between the princes of his family. He posted his son Araṇyarāja at Mt. Abu, and appointed his son Chandana to rule Jalor. His nephew Dusala was established in the kingdom of Bhinmal, which extended up to Balmer on the west.[92] The Hūnas of Hūna-maṇḍala, to the north-west of Mālava, had to suffer defeat at the hands of this king.[93] Muñja invaded Gujarat which was then ruled by Mūlarāja I, the founder of the Chaulukya dynasty there. Being unable to resist the invader, he fled to the desert of Marwar, and took shelter under the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dhavala of Hastikuṇḍi.[94] Warlike activities of Muñja in Gujarat brought him on the border of Lāṭa, which was at that time ruled by Bārappa, a member of a collateral branch of the Chaulukyas. Muñja easily won a victory over Bārappa,[95] but his conquests of Gujarat and Lāṭa did not lead to any acquisition of territories.

While Muñja led aggressive campaigns in the south, the Chālukya Taila II, who wrested the throne of the Deccan from the Rāshṭrakūṭas, cherished a desire to make himself master of the empire which once belonged to them. He began successive campaigns against Mālava, which not long before formed a part of the empire of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. Merutuṅga relates that Taila II invaded Mālava no less than six times, and on all these occasions he was repulsed by Muñja. Ultimately Muñja intended to get rid of this menace by launching an aggressive campaign to crush the military power of Taila II. His able and astute minister Rudrāditya opposed this project, which in his opinion would inevitably bring disaster on his master. But when he found Muñja determined to lead his army into the kingdom of the Chālukyas he entreated him not to cross the Godāvarī in his advance. But Muñja had such overweening confidence in his military power that he ignored the advice of his minister and pitched his camp on the right bank of the Godāvarī. As soon as this news reached Rudrāditya he committed suicide to avoid the shock of seeing his master in the grip of a terrible calamity, which in his opinion was sure to befall him. His forebodings proved correct. In

90 *JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 173.
91 *EI*, IX, p. 75.
92. *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, pp. 20 ff.
93 *EI*, IX, p. 75.
94 *Ibid.*, X, p. 20.
95 *Ibid.*, I, p. 235.

the battle that ensued Muñja fell a captive into the hands of his adversary. Merutuṅga, while describing the fateful end of the king, relates a pathetic story, which seems to be mixed up with a touch of romance. He states that Taila threw Muñja into the prison of his capital and asked his own sister Mṛiṇālavatī to attend on the prisoner. Muñja's ministers, who came to the Chālukya capital in disguise for the rescue of their master, dug a secret tunnel into the prison and made all necessary arrangements for his escape. Muñja, who fell in love with Mṛiṇālavatī, disclosed to her the arrangement made for his escape, and requested her to accompany him to his country. But she betrayed the trust reposed in her and reported the matter to her brother. Taila II forthwith took due measures to stop Muñja's escape and subjected him to severe indignities. Every day Muñja was put in a cage and was dragged from door to door to beg his alms. Subsequently Taila II ordered his execution, and his severed body was hung at the gate of the royal palace.[96]

This story of Muñja's imprisonment and execution is supported in outline by the epigraphic records of the Chālukyas.[97] Though Muñja spent the major part of his life in warfare, he was not indifferent to peaceful pursuits. He was himself a great poet, and he extended his bountiful patronage to those who devoted their lives to the service of the Goddess of learning. Padmagupta Parimala was his chief court-poet. Other eminent poets who lived under his patronage were Dhanañjaya, Bhaṭṭa-Halāyudha, Dhanika, Dhanapāla, Śobhana and Amitagati.[98] The king also excavated a number of beautiful tanks. One of them, situated at Dhārā, is still called after his name Muñja Sāgara. He is said to have built temples at Ujjain, Maheśvara, Oṅkār Mādhātā and Dharampurī. Thus as a soldier, as a litterateur, as a patron of poets and as a builder Muñja occupies a very high position among the rulers of mediaeval India. His death was deeply felt by his subjects whose lamentations seem to have found expression through the poems of Padmagupta.[99]

It is known from Amitagati's *Subhāshitaratnasaṁdoha* that Muñja was on his throne in A.D. 993.[99a] The king died some time between A.D. 995, his last known date,[100] is A.D. 998, the date of the close of the reign of his adversary Taila II. He was succeeded by his younger brother Sindhurāja.

96. *Prabandhachintāmaṇi*, Eng. trans., Tawney, pp. 33-35.
97 *IA*, XVI, p. 23; *EI*, XV, p. 350.
98 *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, pp. 275, 285-90.
99 *JBBRAS*, XVI, p. 174.
99a *ZDMG*, LIX, LXI.
100 The last known date of Muñja is 995 A.D. See *EI*, XXXIII, p. 132 (Editor).

At the time when Muñja and his predecessors had been administering Mālava, a collateral branch of the Paramāra family is found to have been ruling in Vāgaḍa, the country round Arthuna, 28 miles west of Banswara. The earliest known chief of the family is Dhanika, who was born in the lineage of Ḍambarasiṁha, son of Upendra, the founder of the Paramāra dynasty. He flourished in the middle of the tenth century. He built a temple of Dhaneśvara near Mahākāla in Ujjain. He was succeeded by Chachcha, also known as Kakka or Kaṁka. Chachcha fought on the side of Sīyaka II of Mālava against the Rāshṭrakūṭa Khoṭṭiga at Kalighaṭṭa on the Narmadā, and gave up his life bravely in the battle. He was succeeded by Chaṇḍapa, who ascended the throne in the closing years of the tenth century.[101]

IV. THE SHĀHIS

In the second half of the ninth century a Hindu Shāhi dynasty was ruling over the Kabul Valley. As regards the origin of this family Alberuni states that a Brahmin named Kallār was the Wazīr of Lagatūrmān, the last of the Turki Shāhi princes of Kābul (descended from Kanishka). Lagatūrman antagonised the people by his misdeeds. Taking advantage of his unpopularity Kallār imprisoned his master and established himself on the throne of Kābul.[102] He is the founder of a line of kings known as Hindu Shāhis. He could not, however, keep his control over Kābul for a long time, and had to withdraw towards the east before A.D. 870.

The *Rājataraṅginī*[103] mentions the name of a chief Lalliya Shāhi, whose kingdom lay between those of the Darads and the Turushkas. The Darads occupied the Kishan-Gaṅga Valley in Kashmir, and the Turushkas were the Muslims who occupied Kābul. It is generally assumed that Lalliya Shāhi is identical with Kallār, referred to by Alberuni. His capital was Udabhāṇḍa, modern village of Und on the right bank of the Indus, 15 miles above Attock in the Rawalpindi district, Panjab. Kalhaṇa describes him as the most powerful among the kings in the north. Lalliya Shāhi's protégé in the south was Alakhāna, the king of Gurjara who ruled 'the upper portion of the flat Doab between the Jhelum and the Chenab rivers', south of Dārvābhisāra, and probably also a part of the Panjab plain further east. Alakhāna's kingdom was invaded by king Saṅkaravarman (A.D. 883-

101 *EI*, XIV, pp. 296 ff; XXI. pp. 42 ff. *History of the Paramāra Dynasty*, pp. 337 ff.

102 Sachau, II, p. 13.

103 Stein, I, pp. 205-6.

902) of the Utpala dynasty of Kashmir, who succeeded in wresting from him a part of his kingdom known as the Ṭakka land, which Stein identifies with 'a tract adjoining the lower hills east of the Chenab'. Alakhāna seems to have succeeded in preserving the rest of his kingdom with the help of Lalliya Shāhi. Sankaravarman also tried to crush the power of Lalliya but failed. The *Rājataraṅgiṇī* states that Lalliya Shāhi 'was not received into service by Saṅkaravarman, who desired to remove him from his sovereign position'. It may be that Lalliya wanted to enter into a friendly relation with Śaṅkaravarman after the discomfiture of Alakhāna, but his overture was rejected. Śaṅkaravarman, however, could not dethrone Lalliya.

The history of the Shāhi kingdom after the death of Lalliya is somewhat obscure. We know the names of some kings from their coins and the chronicle of Kashmir, but it is not easy to ascertain their relations. Different scholars have accordingly construed the history of this period in different ways. The following sketch is based on the views of Stein, and a somewhat different account, based upon the study of coins, will be found in Chapter on Numismatics.

Lalliya had a son named Toramāṇa, but, according to Alberuni, Samand ascended the throne after Kallār's death. It is likely that Samand usurped the throne by ousting Toramāṇa. This Samand has been identified with Sāmanta, known from numerous coins. But Sāmanta could not enjoy his sovereign position for a long time. Gopālavarman (A.D. 902-4), son and successor of Śaṅkaravarman, took up the cause of the dethroned Toramāṇa and sent his minister Prabhākara against the usurper. Prabhākara forcibly entered Udabhāṇḍa, overthrew the rebellious Shāhi,[104] and placed Toramāṇa on the throne. He gave Toramāṇa a new name Kamaluka.[105] Alberuni mentions the name of Kamalu's successor as Bhīma. An inscription[106] mentions the name of the father of the Shāhi Bhīma as Kalalavarman, obviously an error for Kamalavarman. Kamalu and Kamaluka are no doubt contractions of this name.

Kamalu is mentioned as the Rai of Hindustan by Muhammad 'Ufi.[107] The same authority relates that Sakawand, situated in Zabulistan (the capital of which was Ghazni), was a place of pilgrimage to the Hindus, who visited that place for the worship of the idol there even coming from distant parts of Hindustan. Fardaghan,

104. The 'rebellious Shāhi', who was dethroned by Gopālavarman, king of Kashmir, Seems to have been Sāmanta. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

105 *Ibid.*

106 *EI*, XXI, p. 299.

107 Elliot, II, p. 172.

who was appointed governor of Zabulistan by Amru Lais (A.D. 878-900), led an expedition against Sakawand, conquered the place, drove out the idolators, and broke the idols into pieces. A portion of the plunder that was obtained was distributed among the troops and the rest was sent to Amru Lais, who was informed of the conquest of the place with a request to send strong re-inforcements. As soon as the news of the fall of Sakawand reached Kamalu, he organised a vast army and advanced towards Zabulistan. Fardaghan felt distressed when he heard about the advance of Kamalu at the head of a big army. He had not sufficient force to oppose the enemy and decided to take recourse to a device to meet the situation till the arrival of the reinforcements despatched by Amru Lais. He succeeded in securing the services of some renegade Hindus and sent them to the Kamalu with necessary instruction. They pretended to be friends and reported to Kamalu that Fardaghan, in anticipation of an attack by the Hindus, collected a huge army, which would soon be reinforced by a big contingent sent from Khurasan. Kamalu believed all this and slowed down the advance of his army for precautions for his safety. This gave a respite to Fardaghan, who was soon joined by the forces from Khurasan. Kamalu lost courage, dared not confront this vast army, and abandoned the project. The information supplied above may be accepted as historical. Sakawand was near Jalalabad, which is described by Baihaki[108] as a mountain pass leading to Kābul from India. It was obviously within the kingdom of the Shāhis.

According to the *Rājataraṅginī* Kamalu became king during the reign of Gopālavarman, King of Kashmir, who ascended the throne in A.D. 902. But according to Muhammad 'Ufī, Kamalu was on the throne when Amru Lais (A.D. 878-900) was the ruler of Zabulistan. This anomaly may be solved by assuming that Kalhaṇa is wrong in placing the date of Gopālavarman's accession in A.D. 902, and that it probably took place some time before A.D. 900.

Kamalu was succeeded by his son Bhīma. A stone inscription[109] of Bhīma discovered at Dewai in Gadun territory, describes the king as the *Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Śrī Shāhi Bhīmadeva*. Bhīma gave his daughter in marriage to Siṁharāja, king of Lohara, modern valley of Lohrin comprising the mountain districts south-west of Kashmir in the 'Hill State' of Punch. Siṁharāja's daughter by the Shāhi princess was Diddā, who played a notable part in the history of Kashmir.[110] Bhīma appears to have succeeded in exercising in-

108 *Ibid.*, p. 140.
109 *EI*, XXI, p. 299.
110 Cf. Ch. XVIII.

fluence over the royal court of Kashmir on account of his close relationship with queen Diddā. He built a temple of Vishṇu in Kashmir and gave it the name, Bhīmakeśava, after his own. Stein identifies it with the ruins of a temple at Bamzu near Mārtāṇḍa now converted into a Muslim *zirata*.[111] Bhīma closed his reign some time after A.D. 950.[112] He was succeeded by Jayapāla, whose history will be related in the next volume.

111 Stein, II, p. 298.
112 The date of the accession of Kshemagupta who married Diddā.

Chapter Twenty-seven

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

A. DECCAN AND SOUTH INDIA

1. *Sources of Information*

In the third century A.D. the empire of the Sātavāhanas broke up and gave place to a number of minor dynasties which ruled in different parts of the Deccan till the middle of the sixth century when the rise and progress of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi restored unity to the polity and history of that area. Epigraphical records are the major source of knowledge for this period of three centuries, besides some coins of disputed import; and in the inscriptions, the minor dynasties of Eastern Deccan, the Ikshvākus, Sālankāyanas and Vishṇukuṇḍins, and perhaps also the Vākāṭakas of Berar, are better represented than those of the western half of the plateau—the Ābhīras, Traikūṭakas, Kalachuris and Chuṭus. In the area immediately to the south of the Kṛishṇā river, the Pallavas were the chief power, but there were less important dynasties like the Kadambas, the Gaṅgas and the Bāṇas. All these dynasties may be considered more or less as the successors of the Sātavāhanas; they ruled over areas which had been wholly or in part included in the Sātavāhana empire, and they inherited and carried on the Sātavāhana traditions in polity and administration among other things.[1]

In the extreme south lay the Tamil country divided among the three time-honoured monarchies of the Cheras, Cholas and Pāṇḍyas, besides a number of petty chieftaincies either independent or in subordinate relation to one of the monarchies according to the exigencies of time and circumstance. The political and social organisation of this area differed little in its essentials from that of the rest of India south of the Vindhyas, but it was marked by some features peculiar to the Tamil country where indigenous institutions survived in some strength and blended with those that came in with the flow of Indo-Aryan culture. Strictly speaking, there is little direct

1 Cf. Chs. on Political History (XII-XVII).

evidence on conditions in the Tamil country, excepting the small part of it included in the Pallava dominion, for the period A.D. 300-550 or even 600. The bulk of the earliest stratum of Tamil literature, the Saṅgam literature as it is often called, certainly belongs to the period before A.D. 300, and the evidence of later literature and inscriptions does not commence until after A.D. 600. For the intervening period we have to fall back on conjectures based on what went before and what came after.

The second half of our period (A.D. 600-985) is much better illuminated by our sources than the first. The political history of the more important kingdoms is much better known, and the inscriptions and literature begin to tell us rather more on the state of administration and social life. Casual remarks of foreign travellers and writers sometimes give welcome clues to things not heard of otherwise.

2. *Fundamental Characteristics*

In any study of polity, whether in North or South India, but more specially in the latter, we should keep clearly in view certain fundamental characteristics of the Indian attitude in ancient times towards political organisation. In the first place, the Indians looked to the State for very little; the traditional view was that the ruler upheld the existing social order and afforded protection to the people from internal trouble and foreign invasion, and received as his wage a share in the produce of land. The social order itself derived its sanction and had its roots elsewhere—in Revelation (*śruti*), Orthodox tradition (*smṛiti*), and the Practice of the *élite* (*āchāra*). The ruler had ordinarily little control over the numerous social, economic, and religious concerns of the people, except by way of dispensing justice when justiceworthy disputes demanding justice were brought before him or his courts. The normal regulation and administration of these affairs was bound by ties of locality, caste, occupation, or religious persuasion; these groups had a high regard for custom and ancient practice, but were by no means averse to try new methods should occasion demand it. Each of these groups had its own established constitution, seldom if ever crystallised in the form of definite rules or written down in detail, but generally well understood among its members, and flexible enough to admit of variations in practice or procedure to meet unforeseen situations. There was usually a general assembly which met rarely except perhaps once a year on some definite festive or ceremonial occasion, and an executive body in charge of the daily routine; this body was often chosen by lot from among persons who possessed cer-

tain prescribed qualifications. Voting and decision by a majority of votes were by no means unknown, but the aim was usually to reach a unanimous decision by reconciling or integrating the different interests and points of view. This is no imaginary or idealised picture, but the cumulative impression left on the mind by numerous inscriptions recording transactions in which such groups and associations figured in one way and another. Some concrete instances will appear as we proceed, though a full account of the details cannot be given here. The guilds of merchants like the Nānādeśis and the Five Hundred of Ayyavole; the associations (*śreṇīs*) of craftsmen, artisans and manufacturers like *kañchakaras* (braziers) and *telikis* (oil-mongers); and of students, ascetics, temple-servants, priests and so on, besides the territorial assemblies of the village and *nāḍu*—all functioned more or less independently of the Government. In short, Government's chief task was to protect the framework of the social fabric from disruption due to internal or external causes; the real life of the people was dominated by a network of corporative groups, local, hereditary, or voluntary as the case may be.

Secondly, the duty of protecting society belonged in theory to a special class—the Kshatriyas; by an easy transition in thought and practice, any one who, by favour of circumstances, felt equal to the task of undertaking the rule of a particular area, did not hesitate to do so, and nothing succeeded like success. Each successful adventurer became a king and sought to gain respectability by maintaining an ostentatious court, patronising learning and the arts, and having *praśastis* (lauds) composed in honour of himself and his family; his family often continued to survive long after its glory had spent itself, and then faded out of existence and out of the memory of people. Moreover, aggrandisement was the duty of the ruler; he had to be a *vijigishu*—one who wishes to conquer; and this ideal, universally cherished and acted on by all rulers, great and small, led to frequent wars and skirmishes, resulting in changes in the relative positions of the different powers involved.

Lastly, and as a consequence of the two factors mentioned above, the frequent political changes involving the rise and fall of empires, kingdoms, and principalities did not have such profound effects on the structure of society and civilization as in other countries, for instance, those of Europe. While the establishment and the continued prosperity of an empire often indeed meant an era of high achievement in literature and the arts, the absence of such an imperial power meant by no means any serious set-back in the conditions of civic life.

3. *Rural Administration*

The organisation which made for continuity of life and tradition, held society together, and carried it safe through the storms and turmoils of political revolutions, was the autonomous self-sufficient village. The village was the primary cell of the body—social and politic, and its vitality is well attested for practically the whole area and all the centuries included in this survey. It usually consisted of a number of families each occupying a house of its own in the residential part of the village, owning its own share of the arable land, and enjoying the privileges of grazing cattle, gathering firewood and so on in the waste land and forest lying round about the village and held in common by the villagers as a body. The specific mention of some land belonging to the king as the subject of a gift in a Pallava grant[2] goes directly against the view that all land belonged to the king in the ancient Indian State. That a careful record of the boundaries of the village and of the individual estates in it was maintained, is also borne out by the grants and charters of the times. To cite only one instance, the Uruvapalli grant[3] describes the boundaries of a village of 200 *nivartanas* with meticulous detail. The villagers met periodically for the consideration of matters of common concern, and perhaps also for the settlement of disputes and the administration of justice. There is no doubt that everywhere rural administration grew from timid and tentative improvisations in the beginning to the more elaborate and complicated machinery of committees and officials that we find described in the Chola inscriptions of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The lines and pace of development differed, of course, in different places, and judging from the evidence at hand, the Tamil country appears to have been much more progressive. much readier to try new forms and methods to meet fresh situations as they arose, than the rest of the area covered in this survey. The whole subject is of fascinating interest and deserves much more detailed study than it has yet received; all we can do here is to invite attention to some salient landmarks in the history of village government in South India in our period.

The village headman is referred to by the name *mutuḍa* (*lit.* alderman) in Śālaṅkāyana grants of the fifth century A.D.; and the *grāmabhojaka* of the early Pallava and Kadamba charters seems to be another name for the same official. How the village headman was appointed, and whether his office was hereditary, are matters on

2 Chendalur, *EI*, VIII, p. 233 (*rājavastu bhūtvā sthitam*).

3 *IA*, V, pp. 50-53; also C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, pp. 61-62.

which no clear light is furnished by our sources. But that he was the leader of the village and the intermediary between the villagers and the royal government of the kingdom is fairly clear. Thus, a number of Sālaṅkāyana grants are orders addressed to the village or villagers headed by the *mutuḍa*.[4]

The villagers of Omgoḍu and Pikira are specially mentioned in the Pallava grants bearing their names. The British Museum plates of Chārudevī speak of the officials of the village (*gāmeyikā āyuttā*) without any definite indication as to who appointed them. The Sarsavani plates of Kalachuri Buddharāja (A.D. 610)[5] mention the elders of the village, its *adhikārika* and others. Here we must note the mention of the elders of the village as a class apart from the headman, *adhikārika,* and the generality of the people. They also find mention, besides the *grāmabhojika,* in the Satara grant of Vishṇuvardhana, the younger brother of Pulakeśin II.[6]

In the Tamil country we have references to *manṛam* and *podiyil* as also to *avai* (from Sanskrit *sabhā*) in the classical literature of the Saṅgam period. This makes it clear that some form of a primitive village assembly was known to the rural parts, although the position of the assembly seems to have been better established in the larger towns, particularly the capital cities. *Podiyil* means 'common place' (of meeting) and *manṛam* is explained by a relatively late commentator, who must, however, be taken to represent an authentic tradition, as 'the open place in the centre of the village where all people meet under the shade of a tree'. The songs of the *Puṛanānūṛu* (nos. 46 and 220) show that the *manṛam* was also a court of justice as well as the place where the sentences of the court were executed. In one of them we have an interesting situation. The Chola king doomed the sons of one of his enemies to be thrown to an elephant. A poet interceded successfully on behalf of the youngsters, and appealed to the king's mercy by saying that a strange fear had taken possession of those tender children as they stared in bewilderment at the *manṛam*. The other poem is a lament of a friend of another Chola king at the sight of the *manṛam* of ancient Uṛaiyūr, bereft of its king who had for some unknown reason given up his life by starvation. Here we have testimony of the king going to the *manṛam* of the capital to administer justice in person and do other public business. Of the

4 Ellur plates of Devavarman, A.D. 325—*Elure mutuḍa pamukha gāmo bhanitavo*. Cf. Kantheru plates of Nandivarman II and Peddavegi grant of the same king having *mutuda sahitān grāmeyakān*.

5 *EI*, VI, p. 297. *Rāshṭra-grāma-mahattar-ādhikārikādīn*.

6 *IA*, XIX, pp. 309-10.

nature and working of the *manram* in rural parts of this early period, especially on its political side, we have no direct testimony. But popular gatherings of a social and religious nature in the *manram* of every locality are known to have been a regular feature of rural life, and it was undoubtedly the scene of song, dance, and other popular amusements.

After a long interval, the regular history of village institutions may be said to commence with the inscriptions of the late eighth and early ninth centuries A.D. From these inscriptions we are able to trace the presence of at least three types of assemblies which payed a regular part in local administration, namely (1) the *ūr* (2) the *sabhā* and (3) the *nagaram*. The *ūr* was evidently the commoner type of assembly belonging to the normal run of villages where the land was held by all classes of people who were, therefore, entitled to membership in the local assembly. The *sabhā* was apparently an exclusively Brāhmaṇa assembly of the *brahmadeya* villages where at least at the start all the land belonged to the Brāhmaṇas. The *nagaram* was quite another type; it was an assembly of merchants and belonged to localities where traders and merchants were in a dominant position. These types of assemblies often existed side by side in the same locality, together with many other associations of lesser importance and more restricted scope. Whenever necessary, there was mutual consultation among those different assemblies and associations, and the rule was generally observed that all the interests concerned in a matter were consulted before any decision was taken on it. An inscription from Uttaramerūr,[7] dated A.D. 993-94, just immediately after the close of the period covered in this survey, illustrates this clearly. It records the decision of the *sabhā* that the responsibility for the payment of fines levied by either the king's court (*rājadvāram*), the court of justice (*dharmāsanam*), the revenue department (*vari*), or others, must rest on the particular community or class to which the person fined belonged; and the groups specially named are Brāhmaṇas, Śiva-Brāhmaṇas, accountants, merchants, Vellālar, and any other castes (*jātigal*). It is not clear if all these classes were invited to attend the meeting at which the decision was taken, or it was taken after previous consultation with all of them. The inscription also shows, what is clear in many other ways, that the *sabhā*, generally comprising the *élite* of learning and character in the community, commanded the respect of all other assemblies, and took the lead on important occasions in settling difficult matters of common concern.

7 *EI*, XXII, pp. 205-7.

Of the constitution and working of the *ūr* assembly, we are unfortunately not as well informed as of the *sabhā*. But we may presume that the role of the *ūr* in local administration was similar to that of the *sabhā*. In a large township like Uttaramerūr where the *ūr* and the *sabhā* existed side by side, there arose a natural tendency for the *sabhā* to guide and control the activities of the *ūr*, and for the *ūr* to submit willingly to such guidance.[8] The *ūr* had often an execution committee of its own which was called *āluṅgaṇattār*, the ruling group. We learn nothing, however, of the method by which they were chosen or of the tenure of their office.

Of the *sabhā* more details are forthcoming. In the earliest extant inscriptions of Uttaramerūr, which belong to the reign of Dantivarman Pallava, the *sabhā* already appears as a mature and well established institution exercising almost all the powers that it ever exercised in later times. It sold land, undertook the administration of an endowment for dredging a tank, and made an important settlement (*vyavasthai*) in which the *ūr* was assigned some duties with regard to lands deserted by poor tenants who could not pay the dues on them. A little later, under Nandivarman, it laid down the qualifications and the tenure for the place of the worshipping priest (*archaka*) in a local temple. These early records also contain notable references to *vāriyar*, obviously executive officers subordinate to the *sabhā* and taking their orders from it. A Pāṇḍya inscription from Mānūr in the neighbourhood of Tinnevelly (*c.* A.D. 800) is a landmark in the history of the *sabhā*. It is a record of rules of procedure made by the *sabhā* for the regulation of its future meetings. The meeting of the *sabhā* was summoned by beat of drum, and assembled in the hall of the local temple of Govardhana. The rules made included the following provisions among others: only those who had a full share of the village lands, including shares obtained by purchase, gift, or dowry, were proficient in one Dharma and *mantrabrāhmaṇa*, and were of good conduct, should take part in the proceedings of the *sabhā*. For the future, no fractional shares such as quarter, half, and so on, should be created by sale, gift, or dowry. Those who wish to buy a full share must be proficient in an entire Veda, including its addenda (*pariśishṭa*). No one, who did not enjoy a full share acquired in one of these ways, shall be appointed to any kind of *vāriyam*, i.e., executive duty. Persons who contravene these provisions or obstruct the proceedings of the *sabhā* saying 'nay', 'nay', to every proposition, and those who abetted such offenders, were each to pay a fine of 5 *kāśus* and abide by the

8 See *Studies*, pp. 105-6.

provisions of this settlement for the future. The whole transaction is put through by the *sabhā*, and there is no mention of the king or the government except in the formal dating of the document in the 35th year of the Pāṇḍya ruler, Maṛañjaḍiayan. But doubtless, if obstruction was very strong and the *sabhā* was not equal to controlling it, it was open to it to invoke the aid of the king's officials in enforcing its lawful decisions, and that aid would be readily forthcoming.

The two oft-quoted Uttaramērūr inscriptions of the 12th and 14th years (A.D. 919 and 921) of the Chola monarch Parāntaka I may be said to constitute the next great landmark. In these inscriptions we see the completion of the transition from the appointment of individual executive officers by the *sabhā* (the *vāriyar*) to the establishment of a fairly elaborate committee system, by means of which important sections of local administration were entrusted to committees (*vāriyam*) of 6 or 12 members according to the importance of their functions. The first inscription laid down rules for the election of the various committees, and the second inscription, dated two years later, amended these rules with a view to removing some practical difficulties that had been experienced in their working. Without going into details, too long and complicated for reproduction here,[8a] we may note that the general principle followed was to lay down minimum qualifications of property, learning, and character to be satisfied by persons before being included in the panels for the committees, and then to secure by a system of lot the election of the requisite number from those qualified men, care being taken that all the wards of the township were represented on the committees.

The Tiruchendūr inscription of Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa Mahārāja II (*c.* A.D. 874),[9] mentions that of a large endowment in cash made in favour of the local temple, the urār of Koṛkai became trustees of one part, the *sabhaiyār* of Varaguṇamaṅgalam of another, and the *nagarattār* of Manavirapattanam of yet a third—a striking instance of co-operation among the different types of assemblies for a common cause.

There was a small staff of paid servants in each village, called *madhyasthas*, who assisted the committees of the *sabhā* in their work and maintained the records of the village. They also attended the meetings of the *sabhā*, and assisted in the conduct of the meetings and in recording their resolutions, but themselves took no part in the deliberations. In A.D. 923 the *sabhā* of Brahmadeśam,

8a *Ibid*
9 *EI*, XXI, p. 109.

North Arcot district, resolved that their *madhyasthas,* employed in writing up the accounts connected with the tank, were to be remunerated at the rate of four measures of paddy *per diem,* and were to receive in addition six *kalañjus* of 'red gold' *per annum* with a pair of clothes each; that each of them had, at the end of his year of office, to produce accounts and pass through the ordeal of red hot iron; that those who were declared pure after the ordeal should receive a bonus of a small amount of gold, while those that failed in it should pay a fine of ten *kalañjus* of gold, the reason for the heavy fine being that the corpus of the tank fund was not of sufficient size and that no corporal punishment was to be resorted to by the *sabhā* in such cases.[10]

Similar developments were taking place elsewhere though not perhaps to the same extent. In the Deccan we come across numerous references to the *mahājanas* of villages who were in charge of the local administration under the leadership of *gāmuṇḍas,* corresponding to the *mutuḍa,* the *grāmabhojaka* etc. of an earlier time. About A.D. 700 we read in an inscription that some land was given away to a temple in Bennivur with the assent of the subjects who were *mahājanas.*[11] Again the Lakshmeśvar inscription of *yuvarāja* Vikramāditya (*c.* A.D. 720)[12] contains an important *āchāravyavasthe*—charter of rights and duties—given by the *yuvarāja* to the *mahājanas,* the *nagara* and the eighteen prakritis of Porigere, the king's officials (*rājapurushas*) being required to secure the proper observance of the terms of the charter. The inscription describes rates of taxes to be given by the villagers to the *deśādhipatis* every year in the month of *Vaiśākha* and to the *seṇi* (guild) in the month of *Kārtika.* It also mentions the specialised guilds of braziers and of oilmongers, and of the payment of dues to them. It will be noticed that in these Chālukya inscriptions the relations between the village assembly and the officials of the king's government are somewhat closer than in the more autonomous townships of the Tamil country.

Under the Rāshṭrakūṭas the basis of rural administration continued to be the same as earlier under the Chālukyas of Bādāmi. The inscriptions give ample evidence of the presence of *gāmuṇḍas* and *mahājanas* in each important village and township, and of the diligence and regularity with which they attended to the numerous local affairs. An inscription of A.D. 902-3[13] from Nandavaḍige speaks of a

10 276 of 1915.
11 *SII,* IX, i, no. 48: *mahājana-prajā-sammatade koṭṭadu.*
12 *EI,* XIV, p. 188.
13 *IA,* XII, p. 221.

meeting of the local assembly at which were present all the *mahājanas,* young and old, headed by 'their own three', who were the equals of Kapilarishi; the three particularly mentioned were doubtless the executive-officers of the *mahājanas,* and the esteem in which they were held is seen by their being compared to sage Kapila. Another inscription of A.D. 917 from Haṭṭimattur mentions 'the one hundred and ten' (*mahājanas*) of a village and the fifty families of oil-mongers in the same place co-operating in the conduct of the affairs of the local temple. It is perhaps needless to multiply instances.

The organisation of rural government in practically the whole of South India then conformed to a certain general pattern, but exhibited many variations in detail according to time and place. There was, on the whole, more variety and development in the Far South than in the Deccan, and this development was continued into the next period—the age of the Chola Empire—which witnessed the most remarkable combination of efficient central control with the utmost local freedom ever known in the history of India.

The relation between the village or township and the central government in matters other than the payment of land revenue is best understood by a study of the *parihāras* or exemptions that usually accompany the numerous grants of land recorded in the charters. Such a study will provide also a peep into the tax-system of the times. The Mayidavolu plates of Pallava Śivaskandavarman mention the following items: (1) Exemption from digging for salt. The mining and manufacture of salt was a royal monopoly even under the Sātavāhanas, and continued to be so under the later Pallavas.[14] Specially favoured villages, particularly *brahmadeyas*, were exempted from visits from royal officials for purposes of digging in the villages for salt. The Hirahadagalli plates place the manufacture of sugar on the same level as that of salt. (2) Exemption from the administrative jurisdiction of the head of the district (*aratha-saṁvinayakam*). In some early Kaliṅga grants[15] it is expressly stated that the villagers were, from the date of the grant, to tender to the donee and his descendants all the payments and services which they used to give to the king and his officials. It is also stated that the villages concerned were to be exempt from the entry of soldiers and policemen for any purpose. These *brahmadeyas,* then, were clearly a sort of *imperia in imperio* in which the donee held practically absolute sway in every respect.

14 See Minakshi, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

15 Ragolu and Srungavarapukota plates (*EI*. XII, p. 1; XXV, p. 238; **XXIII, p. 56**).

A Traikūṭaka inscription of A.D. 490-91[16] mentions an exception to the rule that soldiers and policemen should not enter such villages viz., that they may do so for capturing thieves and those who have done evil against the king (*chora-rājāpathakārī-varjam*). This condition expressly stated for onee here may perhaps be taken to be an implied condition governing all such general exemptions. It proves that care was taken to see that exemptions granted to favoured subjects did not produce any serious anti-social consequences. (3) Exemption from liability to supply draught bulls to help the progress of touring officers, who seem to have expected the provision by the villagers of other amenities as well—such as cots, living rooms, and boiled rice, items to which the Hirahadagalli plates add milk, curds, grass, fuel, and green vegetables. That this system of local supplies was fairly widespread in South India is seen from the grants of other dynasties as well.[17] Another common exemption, not specifically mentioned in Mayidavolu plates but included in the Hirahadagalli plates, was (4) freedom from *kara* (tax) and *veṭṭi* (free labour). Other inscriptions contain quite a number of other items of varying importance which need not all be detailed here.[18] But two may be noticed as they are of particular interest. (5) *Manrupāḍu*, corresponding to the Sanskrit expression (*sa*) *daṇḍa-dosha-daśāparādha*. This consisted in fines and other accruals of judicial administration, not handed over to the officials of the State but retained by the favoured donee, either the whole village or the particular person or persons in it. (6) *Neyvilai*, literally 'the price of ghee', which may be taken to correspond to *tuppadere*, literally ghee-tax, of the Kannaḍa inscriptions. This seems to have been the relic in the form of a cash payment in lieu of the supply of ghee to meet the daily requirements of the royal palace, a practice of which the Tamil epic *Śilappadikāram* preserves a clear memory.

The *parihāras* were summed up in theory as 18 in number, but varied in practice with time and place. They give us some idea of the numerous levies and imposts to which the people were subjected at the hands of government, and go far to confirm the impression recorded by Arab writers of the ninth and tenth centuries that the people of India were heavily taxed and that their monarchs had their treasuries full.

16 Surat plates of Vyāghrasena, *EI*, XI, pp. 219 ff.

17 Kudigere plates of Kadamba Māndhātṛivarman, *EI*, VI, pp. 12-16.

18 Minakshi *op. cit.*, Ch. V. All these particulars figure in Vākāṭaka inscriptions also. Fleet *CII*, III, 55 and 56, and Basim plates, *EI*, XXVI.

To complete the picture of the system of taxes and levies we must note that besides the central government there were other agencies which claimed and exercised the right to levy taxes and imposts. In such cases the imposts were usually levied with the consent of the parties involved, and were thus voluntary in character. An inscription of A.D. 918 from Daṇḍapur[19] records that the people of that place resolved upon the following levies in order to maintain in good repair a big irrigation tank in that place. The levies were: three *drammas* on each Brahmin marriage, two on each *upanayana,* one on each Śūdra marriage, and one *paṇa* on every occasion of a *prāyaśchitta.* Numerous instances of such voluntary levies by particular sections, guilds or merchants, caste organisations, and so on, for serving more or less limited purposes may be gathered from the inscriptions of almost every dynasty.

4. *Central Administration*

We may now turn to the machinery of royal administration from the centre. Above the *grāma* was the administrative division called *āhāra, rāshṭra, nāḍu, koṭṭam* or *vishaya* at different times and places. The *rāshṭra* and *vishaya* are sometimes distinguished as two categories, one being a larger division than the other. Likewise, the *valanāḍu* and *maṇḍalam* appear as larger divisions comprising a number of *nāḍus* in Tamil inscriptions. There was no uniformity in the size of these administrative divisions. It was often determined by accidents of history. When, for instance we hear of Bāṇarāja-*vishaya* in a Chālukya inscription of the Bādāmī period,[20] we see at once that a principality, once ruled in independence by the Bāṇas and now subject to the Chālukyan empire, was constituted into one of its *vishayas.*

Just as in the *grāma*, so in the larger division also, there was an assembly of elders, often mentioned in the inscriptions, although little information is forthcoming on its exact constitution or functions. There is mention, for instance, of the *vishaya-mahattaras* of Guddavāḍi-*vishaya* in a Śālaṅkāyana grant of the second half of the fifth century A.D.[21] In a Pallava inscription from the Nellore district the *nāṭṭār* figure together with the *ūrār* and others as the executors of a royal order.[22] As in the *grāma,* so in this larger division, there was a

19 *IA* XII, p. 223.
20 *SII*, IX, pt. I, no. 46.
21 Polamūru grant of Mādhavavarman I.
22 Nellore Inscriptions, p. 429.

chief executive official variously described as *vāpata* as in Bṛihatphalāyana and early Pallava charters, *deśādhipati* in Śālaṅkāyana grants, *deśabhojaka* in a Kadamba grant,[23] and *nāṭṭukkon* in Tamil inscriptions.[24] It seems probable that the *mahātalavara* of the Ikshvāku inscriptions and the *rāshṭrakūṭa* of later inscriptions from Western Deccan were also district officials with similar status.

The designations of several other classes of officials occur in the inscriptions, with very little indication, however, of the exact nature of their duties. In the Ikshvāku inscriptions we come across the *mahāsenāpati*, *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* and *koshṭāgārika*, which may be rendered respectively as Commander-in-chief, Chief Judge, and Treasurer. These high offices were sometimes held in combination. Thus we hear of a *mahātalavara* who was also a *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* and who was entrusted with the task of preparing the draft of a grant in proper form, a task which we find entrusted in other charters to a *rahasyādhikṛita*, usually translated as private secretary (Polamūru grant) or to *mahāsāndhivigrahika* as in the Eastern Gaṅga and Bādāmī Chālukya grants.[25] Śālaṅkāyana grants mention *āyuktakas*, *vallabhas*, and *rājapurushas*; *āyuktaka* like *vāpata* simply means an appointed person and *vallabha* is equated with *adhyaksha* in the lexicon of Hemachandra. *Rājapurushas* recall the *purushas* of the Aśoka inscriptions, a class of officials who stood in close personal relation to the ruling king, interpreted his mind to officials in the provinces, and reported on those officials and their work to the king; but it is doubtful if in the smaller kingdoms of the Deccan and South India there was much scope for these officials to exercise the same class of duties. We also hear of the *ājñapti* or executor of a grant, but this is no separate category of official, because usually any officer near at hand is nominated executor. The Hirahadagalli plates give an unusually long list of officials. At the head of the list are placed *rājakumāras*, princes of blood royal, showing that the kingdom was held in a sort of commission by the male members of the royal family, the junior members and collaterals holding responsible offices in the kingdom under the reigning monarch. The general prevalence of this system is well attested by literature and inscriptions. It was an advantage when there was unity in the royal family, but when differences arose, the arrangement made easy the lapse into civil war and disruption.

23 Hiresakuna grant of Mṛigeśavarman.

24 Tiruchendur inscription of Vāraguṇa-Mahārāja, *EI*, XXI, p. 109, ll. 6 to 7.

25 Kondamudi Pl. *EI*, VI, p. 315. This was also the case with many dynasties in North India. See below § B.

Reference may be made, for example, to the condition of the Chālukya empire of Bādāmī in the interval between the death of Pulakeśin II and the accession of Vikramāditya (above, pp. 425-27). After the *rāja-kumāras* comes the *senāpati;* then, a group of three names *rattihika, maḍabika* and *desādikata. Maḍamba* is a territorial division according to certain Jaina works; so that these three classes of officials were the executive heads respectively of the *rāshṭra, maḍamba,* and *deśa.* Next is mentioned the *gāmabhojaka,* the head of the village, of whom enough has been said already. Next comes a group of three names, *vallava, govallava* and *amachcha,* terms by no means easy to explain but probably bearing on revenue administration. Lastly are mentioned groups of officers concerned with the maintenance of peace and securing safety of life and property. They are *arākhadhikata* (officer in charge of protection), *gumika, tuthika,* and *neyika,* all obscure terms. This list does not seem to be exhaustive, as it is followed by the phrase *annevicha,* 'and others besides'. The same record mentions two other types of officials—*sañcharantaka* and *bhadamanusha*—very plausibly rendered into bailiff and constabulary, whose duty it was to enforce the execution of the orders of the government and the decrees of law courts. The *sañcharantakas* are called *śāsana-sañcharins,* i.e., promulgators of royal commands in the Sanskrit charters of the Pallavas. Later Pallava charters mention yet other officials such as *kośādhyksha,* superintendent of the treasury, *māṇikkappan-dāram-kappān,* the guard of the treasury of jewels who probably functioned under the *kośādhyksha.* We also hear of the *Nilakkalattar* and *adhikārar,* officers of the revenue department who had duties relating to the survey and assessment of cultivated lands. Lastly, there were the *vāyilkelpar,* that is hearers of royal orders, a term which becomes refined in Chola inscriptions into *tiruvāykkelvi,* i.e., hearing (the utterances of) the sacred mouth—that is the king. These terms remind one naturally of their Sanskrit counterpart which occurs in Chālukya and Rāshṭrakūṭa inscriptions, namely *rājaśrāvitam.* The Sanskrit term, however, is dobule-edged. It may mean that a matter was reported to the king for his approval, a procedure implied by the terms *vijñapti* and *viṇṇappam* of other inscriptions, and it may also mean orders uttered by the king. In the Kannaḍa inscriptions the term is found used in both these meanings; and the system of the king issuing oral order usually recorded and put into shape for official action by the private secretary in attendance, *rahasyādhikṛita,* was ancient and universal in India. In striking contrast to this elaborate machinery is the simple formula of the early Gaṅga grants which only speak of a body of well-appointed and loyal servants—*suvibhak-*

ta-bhaktabhrityajanena—betokening a simple machinery of government and the personal touch of the monarch with the details of day-to-day administration.

In addition to village courts and caste and guild *pañchāyats* for the settlement of disputes, there was a series of law courts maintained by the central government for the administration of justice; and these were called *adhikaraṇas* or *dharmāsanas*. *Adhikaraṇadaṇḍam*, fine levied in a court of law, occurs among the *parihāras* enumerated in the Kaśākuḍi plates. These *dharmāsanas* were presided over by state officials who were assisted by advisers learned in the law, the *dharmāsanabhaṭṭas* as they were called. The rollicking farce, *Mattavilāsa*, of the Pallava king Mahendravarman I, contains a scene which clearly suggests that the courts were not free from corruption.[26] In the absence of other evidence ordeals (*divya*) were resorted to; the Vishṇukuṇḍin Mahendravarman I was reputed to be an expert in the conduct of ordeals of various kinds.[27]

Of the existence of a regularly constituted council of minister to assist the king in the day to day administration, we have no clear proof from the inscriptions. There is mention, however, of the *mantri-maṇḍala*, group of ministers, taking part in the coronation of Nandivarman Pallavamalla.[28] It is well known that all manuals of polity laid stress on the need for such a council but we cannot judge how far practice conformed to theory in our period.

5. *The King*

At the head of the State was the king, who was the fountain of honour, Chief Judge, and leader of the armed forces. The early Ikshvākus like Vāsishṭhīputra Chāṁtamula performed Vedic sacrifices such as *Agnihotra, Agnishṭoma, Vājapeya* and *Aśvamedha*. But later monarchs turned to Buddhism, and there was need for a reaction in favour of Vedic religion which was started by the later dynasties, the Pallavas being most prominent among them. They described themselves as 'ever engaged in uplifting Dharma submerged in evils of the age of Kali', and the kings of these dynasties were proud of calling themselves *dharma-mahārājādhirājas*. Though the kings favoured specially the particular religious creed which they professed, they never atempted to impose it on all their subjects; rather they often

26 Minakshi, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
27 Polamūru grant, no. 7 of *ARE*, 1914.
28 *SII*, IV, no. 135, Sec. J. l. I.

patronised, as a matter of policy, all other creeds as occasion demanded. After a political revolution involving a change of dynasty, social and economic stability was often ensured by express proclamations that all pre-existing rights of property, charitable foundations, and so on, would be respected by the new rulers.

Succession to the throne was usually hereditary in the eldest male line, and care was taken to educate princes according to the best standards of the time in literature, law, and the martial arts, and to train them in administrative positions suited to their capacities and tastes. The princesses often attained proficiency in the fine arts, particularly painting, music and the dance. During the minority of Pulakeśin II, his uncle Maṅgaleśa acted as regent; but when he planned to keep Pulakeśin II permanently out of his rights and pass the throne to his own son, public sentiment strongly opposed the move and supported Pulakeśin, who waged war against Maṅgaleśa, defeated and killed him in battle, and took possession of the throne that rightfully belonged to him. Pulakeśin's reign and life came to a sudden end in consequence of a Pallava invasion in A.D. 642; then all was confusion, and the sons of Pulakeśin each prepared to make himself independent ruler over the territory that was under his charge; but one of them, Vikramāditya I, saw the folly of the course, and succeeded in rolling back the tide of foreign invasion, checking the disruptive designs of his brothers, maintaining the unity of the empire, and making himself emperor; and he was not the eldest among the sons of Pulakeśin (above, pp. 426-27). At the beginning of the eighth century, there was no heir to the Pallava throne in the direct male line after the death of Parameśvaravarman II and there was a crisis leading to a regular search for a suitable candidate from the collateral branches of the family. The ministers, the members of the ghaṭikā of the capital city, and the mūlaprakṛiti are said to have gone to Hiraṇyavarman and secured his young son for the place, brought him to the capital, on an elephant, and crowned him king as Nandivarman II (above, pp. 330-31). One of the royal insignia which the deputation to Hiraṇyavarman carried with them was a diadem of the shape of an elephant's scalp.[29] This is a unique instance in the South of a choice of ruler on the initiative of highest officers of the State and the *élite* of society.[29a] The history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas and of the Eastern Chālukyas was marked by a large number of disputed successions and civil wars; in the case of the latter this feature was

29 *SII.* IV, no. 135, Sec. F.

29a Cf. the cases of Gopāla and Yaśaskara (p. 547).

often accentuated, if not actually promoted, by the interference of the Rāshṭrakūṭas in the affairs of Veṅgī with a view to their own aggrandisement. The Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva chose the ablest of his sons, Govinda III, for succession after him, and made him *yuvarāja*. Stambha, the eldest son of Dhruva, did not like this, and was inclined to make trouble. Dhruva then abdicated and crowned Govinda as emperor and sought thereby to avert the impending civil war. Peace was, however, maintained only till the death of Dhruva. Then the war came and Stambha had the support of many of the feudatories of the empire; but Govinda held his own, treated his defeated elder brother with consideration, and justified the choice of his father.

When there was actually no *yuvarāja*, the place (*yuvarājapada*) was sometimes bestowed on high officials as a mark of favour, as is seen from Pallava, Chālukya and Rāshṭrakūṭa inscriptions.

Each royal family had its own banner (*dhvaja*) and seal (*lāñchhana*) which were mentioned prominently in their inscriptions. The royal palace was generally maintained in great state, and a Rāshṭrakūṭa inscription mentions the exhibition of captive elephants and horses at the palace gate.[30] Sometimes the queens occupied a position of almost equal importance with the king; Śīlabhaṭṭārikā, the queen of Dhruva, bore the titles Parameśvarī and Paramabhaṭṭārikā, made grants of land at her own will, and issued her own orders to the executive officers of the government.[31]

In monarchical states much depended on the personal qualities of the monarch, and there was no guarantee that hereditary succession would ensure a regular supply of the requisite ability. But there were several modifying factors. All the members of the royal family had generally a share in the administration and opportunities of influencing the policy of the king; then there was the influence of the high officials of State, some of whom perhaps held their offices in heredity and commanded the respect of the monarch by the distinction of their services to the State, their ability and character. The presence of numerous feudatory monarchs, scions of houses that had once ruled independent kingdoms and were now under the suzerainty of the ruling emperor, and the domination of social life by the large numbers of territorial and corporate organisations spoken of above, went far to mitigate the civil consequences of the rule of

30 Sañjan plates; EI, XVIII, p. 235.
31 *EI*, XXII, p. 98.

incapable or misguided sovereigns. Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda IV, who proved unworthy of the throne, was actually dethroned by his subjects who invited his uncle Amoghavarsha III to accept the throne and save the honour of the royal family (A.D. 935).

6. *Organisation of Defence*

Before concluding this survey of polity in the South, a word must be said on the organisation of defence. Inscriptions bear witness to not infrequent disturbances of peace resulting from raids for cattle-lifting and local quarrels among petty chieftains; on such occasions, every adult male in the affected area was ready to do his bit with such weapons as he had at his disposal, and there are several instances on record of men having laid down their lives in defence of the cattle of the village, the sanctity of its homes, and the honour of its women. We have little information on the way the army was recruited, trained and maintained; in reality each chieftain had his own troops and had to send contingents to the central army in times of war. Infantry was the main strength of the army, but cavalry and elephant corps are also frequently alluded to. Hiuan Tsang states that Chālukyan soldiers, who led the van of the army in battle, went into conflict intoxicated, and that their war-elephants were also made drunk before an engagement. Horses were imported from Arabia, and Arab Muslims were settled in different ports and cities in the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire where they were permitted to practise their own religion and live under their own laws. The Chālukyas of Bādāmi maintained a naval force which conducted operations on the west coast against Revatīdvīpa (Goa) and Purī (on the Elephanta island), and perhaps guarded the coast against pirates. The Pallavas had a navy too, and maintained widespread maritime contacts with the colonies in the East and with China. The Cholas also maintained a naval force which distinguished itself greatly in the century after our period. There was a body of troops who were on oath to defend the king with their lives—a bond which was initiated by the special ceremony of a common meal at the accession of the monarch. These were known as *sahavāsīs* (those who live together) in Karṇāṭaka, and *velaikkārar* (emergency men) in the Tamil country. The institution is specially noticed by early Arab writers like Abu Zayd. The *garuḍas* of the Hoysala and the *tennavan-āpattudavigal* (helpers of the Pāṇḍya in danger) of later Pāṇḍya inscriptions were obviously its continuations in more recent times.

B. NORTH INDIA

1. *The Imperial Guptas*

In the third century A.D., after the downfall of the Kushāṇa empire, Northern India entered upon one of those periods of political disorganisation that have always preceded the rise of empires. From the Kushāṇa territory in the north-west and the Kshatrapa dominion in Kāthiāwār to Samataṭa and Kāmarūpa, and from the Himalayas to the Narmadā, the country was split up into a large number of states, of which those of the Bhāraśivas in the Upper Gangetic basin and the Lichchhavis lower down the valley, were perhaps the most important. It was the crowning glory of the first three Emperors of the Gupta dynasty to create out of this chaos a new political system based upon the organisation of most of the conquered territory under a central government and the establishment of a protectorate over the rest.

The pattern of the Gupta imperial administration was set by the dynasties, indigenous and foreign, that had preceded it in the North as well as in the South. But the Guptas added a fuller and richer content to the whole. At the head of the government stood, as in Maurya and Sātavāhana times, the Emperor. The imperial Guptas, however, discarding the modest title of *rājan* which had contented the older dynasties, assumed the high-sounding style brought into vogue by the foreign (Indo-Greek, Śaka, Parthian and Kushāṇa) rulers. The most characteristic of such titles was *mahārājādhirāja* adopted by the Guptas from Chandra-gupta I onwards alike in their inscriptions, coin-legends and seals.[1] Variants of this imperial title were *rājādhirāja*,[2] *parama-rājādhirāja*,[3] *rājādhirājarshi*[4] and *rāja-rājādhirāja*[5]. Corresponding to the above we have the title *mahādevī* applied to the Chief Queen of the imperial Guptas, no doubt, after the precedent set by the Ikshvāku kings of the Telegu country in the third century A.D.[6]

1 The title *mahārāja- rājādhirāja*, applied to Samudra-gupta and Chandra-gupta II. In the Mathurā Pillar ins. of G.E. 61 (*EI*, XXI, pp. 8 ff.) is the exact Sanskrit equivalent of the Prākrit designation of the Parthian Azes I and Gondophares and the Kushāṇa Kaṇishka I on their cointypes as well as that of the Kushāṇa Kanishka I, Vāsishka and Kaṇishka II in their inscriptions.

2 See the legend on Samudra-gupta's Aśvamedha coins (CGD, p. CXV).

3 Cf. the legend on Kumāra-Gupta I's Archer coins (CGD, p. CXV).

4 Ins. no. 10.

5 Ins. no. 26.

6 Cf. *EI*, XX, no. 24.

In contrast with the simple style of *mahārāja,* the lofty title of *mahārājādhirāja* undoubtedly helped to emphasise the unique position held by the paramount ruler over and above the multitude of ordinary kings, a change of style noticeable in the genealogical lists of the Guptas from Chandra-gupta I onwards. To this the great Guptas added other epithets claiming for themselves superhuman qualities which raised them almost to the level of the gods. Of Samudra-gupta we are told by his panegyrist that 'he was the incomprehensible spirit that was the cause of production of good and destruction of evil,' that 'he was equal to the gods Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra, and Antaka', that 'he had no antagonist of equal power in the world', that 'he was a mortal only in celebrating the rites of the observances of mankind, but otherwise a god dwelling on the earth' (no. 3). In later genealogical accounts some of the above epithets along with others from the stock description of Samudra-gupta, thus making the real founder of Gupta imperial greatness an almost legendary hero. Such are the phrases 'exterminator of all kings' 'whose fame was tasted by the waters of the four oceans', 'who was the battle-axe of the god Kritānta.' The later genealogists habitually describe Chandra-gupta II as having no antagonist equal to himself *(svayam-apratirathah).* In the records of North Bengal ranging from G. E. 113 to 224, the Emperors are given the trilogy of titles *(parama-daivata parama-bhaṭṭāraka mahārājādhirāja)* which, with the slight change of *parama-daivata* into *parameśvara,* became the distinctive designation of paramount rulers in later times. With the object of claiming superhuman excellence for them, the coin-legends of the Emperors from Samudra-gupta down to Skanda-gupta and Budha-gupta attribute to them the acquisition of heaven by good deeds following their conquest of the earth.

The Gupta Emperors no doubt exercised the supreme executive and judicial authority traditionally belonging to ancient Indian royalty from Vedic times onwards. But on this point our records are almost completely silent. We have, on the other hand, frequent references to the Emperor's possession of the supreme command in war.

It is characteristic of the Imperial Guptas that while taking high credit for their successful wars and conquests, they prided themselves also on their benevolence towards the needy and the afflicted, as well as their success in elevating the moral and material standards of their subjects. Of Samudra-gupta, his panegyrist says that he dedicated himself to the task of relieving the distress of the miserable, the poor, the helpless and the afflicted, and again, that 'he was the

glorified personification of kindness to mankind' (*samiddho-vigrahavān lokānugrahasya*).[7] More emphatic is the tribute paid to the administration of Skanda-gupta by his Governor of Surāshṭra. There we read that 'while he, the king, is reigning, verily no man among his subjects falls away from religion (and) there is no one who is distressed, (or) in poverty, (or) in misery, (or) avaricious, (or) who, worthy of punishment, is overmuch put to torture.'[8] That these claims were not without a substratum of truth, we shall presently have occasion to prove from independent evidences.

Next in rank to the Emperor stood, as in the age of the *Jātakas* and the *Arthaśāstra*, the Crown-prince (*yuvarāja*). The rule of succession in the Gupta Empire was hereditary descent in the male line, such as can be traced back to Vedic times. But the Emperor frequently exercised the right of selecting his heir apparent. The legend *śrī-yuvarāja-bhaṭṭāraka-bal-ādhikaraṇasya* occurring in an inscribed clay-seal from Basarh, as interpreted below, would show that the Crown-prince was in command of a regularly constituted force requiring a special office for its supervision. Similarly the legend *śrī-yuvarāja-pādīya-kumārāmāty-ādhikaraṇasya* occurring on other seals would suggest that the Crown-prince had his own office-staff belonging to the order of *kumārāmātyas*.[9]

The Imperial Guptas continued the traditional machinery of bureaucratic government. Foremost of the high officers of state appears to have been the *mantrī* (High Minister), whose office was sometimes hereditary (ins. no. 18). We have next to mention the group of high imperial officers with the prefix *mahān* attached to their titles, for which the precedent was supplied to the Guptas by their predecessors. Such was the *mahābalādhikṛita* corresponding probably to the *mahāsenāpati* of the Śātavāhanas.[10] In the inscription no. 18 Prithivīshena is described as the *mantrī* and afterwards the *mahābalādhikṛita* of Kumāra-gupta I, thus suggesting that these officers were respectively the heads of the civil and military administration of the Imperial Guptas. The *mahābalādhikṛita* controlled a staff of subordinate officers like the *mahāśvapati* (Chief Officer of Cavalry),

7 *CII*, III, no. 1 line 26. The reading and translations of Fleet are defective.

8 D. C. Sircar, *SI*, p. 259. *CII*, III, no. 14.

9 For references see below. For criticism of a different interpretation of the above phrases by R. D. Banerji (*AIG*, pp. 73-4), see *BIH*, pp. 184 ff. The explanation here given differs slightly from that presented in the last-named work.

10 *EI*, VIII, pp. 67, 89 and XIV, pp. 158 ff.

mahāpīlupati (Chief Officer in charge of Elephants), *bhaṭāśvapati* (Chief Officer of the Regular Cavalry) and *aśvapati* (cavalry officer), known from other sources as belonging to this period. To the same category as the *mahābalādhikṛita* belong the *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* whose office may be traced back to the Kushāṇa and Ikshvāku times.[11] The *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* was doubtless the controlling authority over the mere *daṇḍanāyakas*, also traceable to this period.[12] Though the term may stand equally well for the office of 'Chief Judge' or 'Chief General,' it seems preferable to take *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* in the present context in the former sense, since the *mahābalādhikṛita* is mentioned side by side as a distinct office.[13] To the category of high imperial officers belongs also the *mahāpratīhāra* (*v. l., manāpratīhāra* lit 'Chief Door-keeper', perhaps 'Chief of the Palace-Guards') who doubtless controlled the *pratīhāras*.[14] Another officer, now heard of for the first time but destined to have a long career, was the *sāndhivigrahika*, the 'Minister in charge of Peace and War;' or more generally, 'the Minister of Foreign Affairs.'[15]

Among other officers of the Gupta administration may be mentioned the *amātyas* (a generic designation for officials) who are known not only to the *Arthaśāstra* and *Jātaka* tradition but also to the inscriptions of the pre-Gupta period.[16] The Guptas, it seems, created a special order (or rank) out of this class, which was known by the title *kumārāmātya*.[17] To this exalted order belonged not only high imperial officers like the *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Harisheṇa of the Allahabad Pillar inscription (no. 3) and the mantris Sikherasvāmin and Prithivīsheṇa (no. 18), but also officers in charge of districts like Vetravarman (nos. 20-21) and Kulavṛiddhi (no. 22) to be noticed below. The seals of the *adhikaraṇas* of the *kumārāmātyas* that have been recovered

11 Mathura Ins. of Vasu (*EI*, IX, p. 242), Ganeshra Pedestal Ins (*EI*, XXIV, p. 206), Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions. (*EI*, XX pp. 17-18).

12 For names of individual *mahādaṇḍanāyakas* under the Imperial Guptas, see ins, no. 3 lines 32-33. Basarh Seal no. 17, Bhita Seal nos. 32 and 43-44 For a series of seals bearing the names of individual *daṇḍanāyakas* of the Gupta period, see Bhita seals nos. 44-51.

13 For some discussion about the significance of this term, see *BIH*, pp. 177-79. The explanation given here differs from that suggested in the last-named work.

14 For the names of *mahāpratīhāras* of the Imperial Gupta period, Cf. Basarh Seals nos. 16 and 18.

15 Ins. no. 3, line 32.

16 Bhita Seal no. 40; Basarh Seal no. 210 in Spooner's list.

17 The significance of this term is discussed in *BIH*, pp. 180-87.

from Bhiṭā and Basarh, bear the characteristic crest of the goddess Lakshmī with or without attendants. Another generic class of officials known to the Guptas was that of *āyuktas* (or *āyuktakas*), which may be traced back to the *yutas* of Aśokan inscriptions and *yuktas* of the *Arthaśāstra*, the Epics and the Manu-saṁhita. In the Allahabad Pillar inscription we find *āyuktapurushas* engaged in the pleasing task of restoring the wealth of various kings that had been conquered by Samudra-gupta.[18] This would suggest that the *āyuktas*, like the *yuktas* of the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Manu-Saṁhita*, were concerned with revenue administration. On the other hand, we find an *āyuktaka* in charge of the district of Koṭīvarsha and several *āyuktakas* stationed at Puṇḍravardhana during the reign of Budha-gupta.[19]

We can trace to some extent the policy of the Imperial Guptas regarding the organisation of the Chief Officers of State. The Guptas, to begin with, do not seem to have favoured the creation of an exclusive official class of the type suggested in Megasthenes' description of 'the caste of councillors and assessors' in Chandragupta Maurya's time. The *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Dhruvabhūti, father of *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Harishena of the Allahabad Pillar inscription is described as *khādyaṭapākika* which may mean, as has been suggested, 'the superintendent of the royal kitchen.' The *mantrī-kumārāmātya* Sikharasvāmin of the Karamdanda inscription (no. 18) came from a Brāhmaṇa lineage. The *mahārāja* Mātṛivishṇu of the time of Budha-gupta who was probably a *vishayapati* under the provincial governor Suraśmichandra, mentions three pious Brāhmaṇas as his ancestors in the male line (no. 39). While selecting their high officials from Brāhmaṇas and other classes, the Guptas did not neglect the claims of hereditary descent. Reference has been made above to the *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Harishena (no. 3) and *mantrī-kumārāmātya* Pṛithivīshena (no. 18). Vīrasena, belonging to the ministry of foreign affairs, claims to have acquired his position by hereditary descent (*anvaya-prāpta-sāchivyah*, no. 10). The Guptas evidently felt themselves strong enough to permit the combination of high offices in the same hands. Harishena of the Allahabad Pillar inscription held the offices of *sāndhivigrahika*, *kumārāmātya* and *daṇḍanāyaka*. The *mahārāja mahāsāmanta* Vijayasena, who was a feudatory of the Emperor Vainyagupta, was also *mahāpratīhāra*, *mahāpīlupati*, *pañchādhikaraṇoparika*, *pāṭyuparika* and *purapālōparika* (i.e., Chief of the Palace-guards, Chief Officer in-charge of elephants, as well as the *uparika* in-charge of the

18 No. 3, line 26.

19 Cf. ins. nos. 37, 40. Probably the *prāyuktaka* of Basarh seal no. 19 in Bloch's list belongs to the same category.

five offices, of *patis*(?) and of City Superintendents). The Guptas, evidently, were not averse (as the example of Prithivīsheṇa shows) to the transfer of civil officers to the military branch. Whether they had Boards of magistrates such as were known to Chandragupta Maurya's administration it is not possible to say with certainty. But we hear of two *mahādaṇḍanāyakas,* viz., Harisheṇa and Tilabhaṭṭaka functioning simultaneously in the time of Samudra-gupta (no. 3).

We may pause here to notice a striking achievement of the Imperial Guptas, viz., their organisation of permanent offices at the central and local headquarters, for which no doubt good precedents existed in the past. Confining ourselves in the first place to the former head, we find that the inscribed clay-seals from Basarh, while largely belonging to the provincial administration, refer also to some administrative offices at the Imperial Secretariat. The legend *śrī-parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pādīya-kumārāmāty-ādhikaraṇasya* points directly to the office of the *kumārāmātya* attached to the personal staff of the Emperor. With this may be compared the above-quoted legend *yuvarāja-pādīya kumārāmāty-ādhikaraṇasya* and the like, referring to the office of the *kumārāmātya* on the Crown-prince's staff, which may have been sometimes fixed at the imperial capital. If the other offices signified by the legends *śrī-raṇabhāṇḍāgār-ādhikaraṇa, daṇḍapāśādhikaraṇa* and *dharmmāsan-ādhikaraṇa* were to be located at the provincial (or district) headquarters, we might still suppose their counterparts to have existed at the imperial capitals.

In the branch of provincial government it will be convenient for us to begin with the administration of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*, of which we have fuller knowledge than of any other province of the Gupta Empire. We know from a series of inscriptions (nos. 20-21, 38, 40) that have been discovered in North Bengal, that this province was ruled successively by Chirātadatta, Brahmadatta and Jayadatta with the title of *uparika.* But later (no. 48) it was probably filled by a prince of the blood royal, called by his official designation *mahārāja-putra devabhaṭṭāraka.* This example, to which others will be added shortly, is reminiscent of the prince-viceroys of the Maurya administration. It is interesting to observe that both Brahmadatta and Jayadatta, as well as the *mahārājaputra,* adopted the honorific designation of *mahārāja,* which may have been a reward for loyalty to the Emperor, or a token of semi-independence.

For administrative purposes Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* was divided into a number of districts normally called *vishayas,* but some times (no. 37) designated as *vīthi,* which were subdivided into *maṇḍalas.* The most frequently mentioned *vishaya* is Koṭīvarsha which was

ruled at different times by a *kumārāmātya* (nos. 20-21), an *āyuktaka* (no. 40) and a *vishayapati* (no. 48). From other records we learn that the unnamed district of which Pañchanagarī was the centre, was ruled by a *kumārāmātya,* while the metropolitan district, of which Puṇḍravardhana was the capital, was in charge of *āyuktakas* (no. 37). It is characteristic of the policy of administrative decentralisation followed by the Guptas that the district officer is habitually said to be nominated by the provincial governor, though the statement is naturally omitted where there is no mention of either of these officers (nos. 22, 37).

We have next to mention what looks like a bold experiment of the Imperial Guptas, viz., the association of popular representatives with the local government. We find in several records, mentioned above, that the district officer in charge of Koṭīvarsha, along with the Municipal Board (*adhishṭhānādhikaraṇa*), transacted the essential business in connection with certain sales of government lands. The seal of the Municipal Board of Koṭīvarsha has been preserved in one case (no. 48). This Board consisted principally of four members, viz., the *nagara-śreshṭhī,* (Guild President), the *sārthavāha* (Chief Merchant), the *prathama-kulika* (Chief Artisan), and the *prathama-kāyastha* (Chief Scribe).[20] In the unnamed district centering around Pañchanagarī a transaction of the same type was carried out by the *kumārāmātya* and the *vishay-ādhikaraṇa* (no. 22), while in the metropolitan district it was effected by the *āyuktakas* and the Municipal Board (*adhishṭhān-ādhikaraṇa*), which had the *nagara-śreshṭhī* as its leading member (no. 37). We have no knowledge of the method of selection of members of the Municipal Board. We may however infer from references in the Basarh seals to the collective as well as separate guilds (*nigamas*) of *śreshthī, sārthavāha* and *kulikas*, that similar associations existed in the Koṭīvarsha and other districts of North Bengal, and that the members of the Municipal Board, other than the leading scribe, were the representatives (perhaps even the Presidents) of these associations.

In other cases of land-sale transactions belonging to this province, the district officer and the Municipal board are left out of account altogether, and the task is entrusted to village officials and residents. In the Khadapara (or Khatapara) district such a transaction was effected by the householders (*kuṭumbins*), the Brāhmaṇas and the *ashṭakul-ādhikaraṇa* of the village (no. 15). A transaction of the same kind was carried out in the district around Palāśavṛindaka by the *ashṭakul-ādhikaraṇa* headed by the village elders (*mahattaras*), the village

20 We give what appears to be the most probable explanation of the above terms, but other meanings have also been suggested.

headman (*grāmika*) and the house-holders (*kuṭumbins*) (no. 38). The precise significance of *ashṭakul-ādhikaraṇa* is unknown, but it may be taken generally to stand for a rural board. We have no knowledge of the composition of this board, but the presence of village elders, the householders and so forth undoubtedly points to that association of the popular element with the local administration which we have just mentioned to be an achievement of the imperial Guptas.

The procedure of disposal of the State lands described in these records is sufficiently complex. The intending purchaser has first of all to apply more or less in a prescribed form stating the quantity and nature of land desired, the object for which it is wanted, and the applicant's willingness to pay the price at the standard rate prevailing in the locality. The district officer and the *adhikaraṇa* (or equivalent authority) refer the application to one or more *pustapālas* (record-keepers) who submit their report after considering the correctness of the statement about the standard rate, the loss or gain to the Emperor and so forth. On their recommendation the receiving authority accepts the sale-price and transfers the plot, informing the local people and demarcating the land. It will be observed that the records refer only to one class of governmental transactions, viz., that relating to the sale of State lands. It is permissible to think that the services of the district officer and the municipal board (or those of the local authorities and the resident villagers) were utilised for other branches of State business as well. Otherwise it would be difficult to account for the presence of representatives of trade and industry in connection with transactions relating exclusively to transfers of land. We may also suppose that an equally complex procedure was in vogue for the transaction of other branches of governmental work than the disposal of State lands.

The administration of Tīra-*bhukti* under the Imperial Guptas, on which some light is thrown by the discovery of a large number of inscribed clay-seals and sealings at Basarh (the site of ancient Vaiśāli),[21] was of the same general type as that of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*. But there were some distinctive features. Not only was there an *uparika* (governor) in charge of the province, but he had his own office commemorated in the seal-legend *Tīra-bhukty-uparik-ādhikaraṇasya*. Another officer having jurisdiction over the whole province was the *vinaya-sthitisthāpaka* whose office is commemorated in the legend *vinayasthiti-sthāpak-ādhikaraṇasya*. If this officer's function has been correctly defined as that of Censor of Morals, he would repre-

21 For description of Basarh seals and sealings by T. Bloch and D. B. Spooner, see *ASIAR*, 1903-04, pp. 81 ff, and 1913-14, pp. 98 ff respectively.

sent the Aśokan *Dharma-mahāmātras*, who were charged with censorial as well as administrative and judicial duties. Among other Basarh seals those bearing the specific legends *Tīra-kumārāmātyādhikaraṇasya* and *Vaiśāly-ādhishṭhān-ādhikaraṇasya* may refer respectively to the District Board at Tīra in charge of the *kumārāmātya* and the Municipal Board at Vaiśālī. We have unfortunately no knowledge of the composition of these boards. The Basarh seals, however, speak of collective as well as separate guilds of *śreshṭhī*, *sārthavāhas* and *kulikas*, while mentioning also an individual chief *kulika*. We have, moreover, the analogy of the *adhishṭhān-ādhikaraṇa* of Tīra-*bhukti* as well as of these representing their common (or separate) guilds. Another seal-legend from Basarh refers to the *adhikaraṇa* of the *kumārāmātya*. In the absence of other indications it is not possible to fix its precise character. Some traces of the provincial government prevailing in Magadha in Gupta times is obtained from the mutilated Bihar Pillar inscription (no. 42). It has preserved the names *uparika* and *kumārāmātya*. Of these the former (as is evident from the example of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*, given above), was no doubt the provincial governor, while the latter in the present context would seem to represent the district officer. This would bring the administration of Magadha into line with that of other provinces of the Gupta Empire.

The administration of the Kauśāmbī tract, so far as it can be made out from the inscribed clay-seals discovered by Marshall on the ancient site of Bhita,[22] appears to have been of the same type as those described above. We have in the first place the seal-legend referring to the *adhikaraṇa* of the Sāmaharsha district. Other districts of this region may have had similar *adhikaraṇas* (or Boards). Reference is made in other legends to the *adhikaraṇa* of the *kumārāmātya* on the staff of the *mahāśvapati-mahā-daṇḍanāyaka* Vishṇurakshita and the *adhikaraṇa* of the *āyuktaka* apparently connected with the *mahārāja* Śaṅkarasiṁha.

With politic generosity, and in accordance with the best traditions of imperial policy prescribed in the text-books, the Imperial Guptas left a number of states (individual monarchies as well as *saṅghas*) in the enjoyment of subordinate independence as has already been noted (pp. 43 ff). The status of the feudatories probably varied according to their relative strength in comparison with the paramount power. We may well believe that under the vigorous rule of Samudra-gupta, the *pratyantanripatis* as well as various tribes had no other choice than to pay all kinds of tribute to the Emperor, to render him general

22 For Bhita Seals, cf. *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pp. 51. ff.

obedience and to attend his Court for performing homage. On the other hand, it is significant that, as noted above (pp. 83 ff), some feudatories, in a later period, issued land-grants without any reference to the Gupta Emperor. We have scanty knowledge of the internal constitution of the Gupta feudatory states. There are, however, good reasons to believe that some of the tribes at any rate had early adopted a monarchical constitution, e.g., the Sanakānikas (no. 6). On the other hand, the Yaudheyas, the famous republican tribe dating from Pāṇini's time, lived in the Gupta period under a constitution which allowed concentration of civil and military authority in the hands of a single chief[23]. Of the other feudatories, we have reason to think that their administration was modelled on that of the paramount power. In the copper-plate inscriptions of the Parivrājaka-mahārājas, reference is made to a hereditary family of ministers holding the offices of *amātya, bhogika,* and *mahāsāndhivigrahika.* The first and the third offices may be traced back to the Imperial Guptas, while the *bhogika,* now found for the first time, probably means the possessor of an estate. Another officer was the *mahābalādhikṛita* who is mentioned in one particular inscription of these kings. The inscriptions of the Parivrājakas (nos. 53, 58) contain a clause now found for the first time, but probably going back to the time of the Gupta Emperors, which seems to mark a new development of village administration. This is the phrase *chora-varjjam* (or *chora-droha-varjjam*), which we have elsewhere shown to mean that there was a system of village police maintained at the cost of the inhabitants, and that donees of pious grants were exempted from this tax.

We have some interesting glimpses of the tendencies and characteristics of the Imperial Gupta administration from the contemporary account of Fa-hien which has been discussed above (p. 62).

In the course of his account of the Middle Kingdom, Fa-hien significantly observes: 'The king's body-guards and attendants all have regular salaries.' In the same context we are told: 'Only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay a portion of the gain from it.' This proves, according to our explanation given elsewhere,[23a] that the most important item of Gupta revenue, viz., that derived from the agricultural land, was calculated at the traditional rate of a portion of the produce.'

The result of the beneficent administration of the Imperial Guptas was revealed in the happy and prosperous condition of the people

23 Kalyan Kumar Dasgupta, A *Tribal History of Ancient India,* p. 227.
23a *HRS,* pp. 191-2.

under their rule. We have Fa-hien's invaluable testimony to the effect that the people of the Middle Kingdom were 'numerous and happy.' Certain tracts of the empire enjoyed exceptional prosperity. Such was the case with Sāṅkāśya of which Fa-hien says: 'This country is very productive and the people are flourishing and happy beyond comparison.' Such, above all, was the territory of Magadha of which we are told: 'The cities and towns of this country are the greatest of all in the Middle Kingdom. The inhabitants are rich and prosperous.'[24]

Fa-hien refers to the humanitarian character of the penal law of the Guptas (above, p. 62). The same spirit was at work in other branches of the imperial administration as well. Reference has been made above (p. 76) to the ancient Sudarśana Lake, which burst its embankment, but it was repaired with a great masonry by Parṇadatta, the Governor of Surashṭra and his son Chakrapālita, the local magistrate. The munificence of the imperial Guptas in the cause of learning and religion is proved by the foundation of a series of monasteries at Nālandā.[25] The religious policy of the Guptas was also very enlightened, and though they were for the most part devout Vaishṇavas, they allowed complete toleration to the followers of other faiths.

Interesting sidelights on Gupta administration are presented in two famous Sanskrit plays, the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* and the *Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam* that are generally ascribed to this period. In the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* we have animated descriptions of the activities of the city police in connection with the movements of a political suspect. We have also a vivid picture of a great criminal trial in Act IX of the drama. From this we learn that the court-house was a separate building (*adhikaraṇa-maṇḍapa*) with seats for the judiciary and the litigants. It had a full staff consisting of the judge (*adhikaraṇika* or *adhikaraṇa-bhojaka*) and his two assistants called *śreshthī* (Guild-Warden) and *kāyastha* (clerk), not to speak of the beadle, the guardsman (*rāja-purusha*) and the executioners (*chaṇḍālas*).[26] The proceedings open with a formal summons by the beadle at the Judge's instance to the people waiting outside to present their case. When the plaintiff has

24 *FTL*, pp. 42, 43, 52, 79.

25 *HTW*, II, p. 164.

26 In the same scene Chārudatta, while entering the court-house, refers figuratively to its constituent factors. These are *mantrins* (probably meaning in the present context, the judge and his two assistants), *dūtas* (probably meaning 'beadles'), the *charas* (spies), *kāyasthas* ('scribes'), the elephants and horses (instruments for execution), and so forth.

stated his suit, the Judge summons through the beadle the material witnesses for examination, and after hearing them he forms his own judgment.[27] In keeping with the formal character of the whole procedure, the Judge causes the material portions of the depositions of plaintiff and witness to be recorded in writing. There was, however, nothing to prevent an outsider from making his appearance and deposing to the facts of the case. It may also be remarked that both the *śreshṭhī* and the *kāyastha* join with the Judge in interrogating the witnesses. At the end of the trial scene, the Judge pronounces the sentence of guilt on the hero Chārudatta. But he says that the *Smṛiti* law prescribes banishment without confiscation of property, but not the death penalty, for a guilty Brāhmaṇa. The king, however, evidently exercising his superior prerogative, overrides the injunctions of the Smṛitis and orders Chārudatta to be put to death by impalement.

Another vivid picture of police administration in the capital city is presented in Act V of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñāna-Śākuntalam*. A fisherman found in possession of the king's signet-ring is closely examined by the *Nāgaraka-śyāla* ('Chief of City Police') and two policemen (*rakshiṇau*). The fisherman appears on the stage with his arms bound behind his back and is roundly assailed and abused in the course of the interrogations. When the police chief finds sufficient evidence of the fisherman's innocence, he takes the case before the king, leaving the prisoner in the safe custody of the constables. Evidently the direct trial of serious crimes is held (as in the *Jātaka* times) to lie within the king's competence. In the end the king, convinced of the fisherman's innocence, orders him to be set free and pays him a handsome reward. The poor man, however, is constrained abjectly to thank the police chief and, what is more, to share his reward with the two constables—a telling reminder of the tremendous authority exercised by the police over the common folk, and the proverbial corruption of police in all ages in India.

In the above account the police chief is called *rāshṭriya* or *nāgaraka* while other officers are called *daṇḍadhāraka* or *daṇḍapālaka* and invested with military titles like *senāpati* and *balapati*. This nomenclature as well as status is unknown to the records of the Gupta period which, as we shall see presently, are acquainted with police officers called *daṇḍikas, daṇḍapāśikas* and so forth, without any military designation attached to their office. The *adhikaraṇa* of the *Mṛichchha-*

27 As the judge says of the case in question, it had a two-fold aspect: the investigation of allegations depending upon the plaintiff and defendant, and that of facts, upon himself.

kaṭika reminds us of the same term in the Gupta inscriptions and clay-seals, especially in including the two members *śreshṭhī* and *kāyastha* in its composition. But otherwise there is no resemblance between the two bodies. In the former case the *adhikaraṇa* is the High Court of Justice deciding serious crimes subject to the king's prerogative of declaring the sentence. In the latter it is an administrative Board sharing with the district officer in the transaction of official business relating to the sale of government lands. The *adhikaraṇa* of the Gupta times in Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* or the North Bengal province contained, in addition to the *śreshṭhī* and the *kāyastha*, two members representing trade and industry, viz., the *sārthavāha* and *prathama-kulika*. We may take it then, that the administration of police and justice sketched in the dramas belonged to the traditional system while that reflected in the records of the Imperial Guptas was largely their own creation. The Guptas, in other words, introduced a new administrative machinery marked in some cases by an original official nomenclature and in others by the reconstitution of the old official bodies. What improvement was effected by the Imperial Guptas on the spirit of the old administration with its reliance on espionage and corporal punishment in criminal trials, has been noticed above (pp. 62-63).

2. *Contemporary Dynasties*

Among the dynasties contemporaneous with the Imperial Guptas, none was more remarkable than the illustrious house of the Vākāṭakas of Vidarbha (pp. 128 ff). Though they were allied by marriage successively with the two great northern royal houses of the Bhāraśivas and the Imperial Guptas, their administration had the closest affinity with that of the southern kings. Like the Pallava king Śivaskandavarman of the Hirahadagalli inscription, the Vākāṭaka kings of the Vatsagulma branch assumed the striking title of *dharmamahārāja*. Like the early Pallava kings, again, the Vākāṭakas recognised a conventional list of immunities belonging to *brahmadeyas*.[28] The Vākāṭakas, however, attached greater importance to State authority than the early Pallavas. In the first place, they habitually declare the immunities in favour of *brahmadeyas* to have been approved by former kings. In one remarkable record, the king, while granting a village and adjoining lands to a group of one thousand Brāhmaṇas, expressly reserves to himself the right (almost unique of its kind) of revoking the grant if the donees were to commit certain specified

28 *CII*, III, pp. 236 ff; *EI*, XV, pp. 41 ff; XXVI; pp. 145 ff.

offences against the State as well as religion and morality.[29] In the same inscription the donated lands are declared to have been measured by the royal measure (*rājamāna*)—a striking instance of application of the official standard of measurement to agricultural lands. The administrative machinery of the Vākāṭaka kings presents some striking features. The charters of the kings were normally written by the *senāpāti,* and in one instance only it is said to be written by a *rājādhikṛita.*[30] This last is a new official title and has been translated as 'Chief Minister.' It seems somewhat incongruous for the head of the military administration to be habitually associated with a purely civil work, viz., that of recording the pious grants of land by the king. It is, however, a type of work with which the *mahāsāndhivigrahika* was habitually connected and this connection can be traced to a record of the Parivrājaka *mahārāja* Hastin[31] and henceforth becomes a commonplace of ancient Indian land-grants.

A record of Yaśodharman, also called Vishṇuvardhana (p. 94), throws an interesting sidelight on his provincial administration. We hear of a certain Abhayadatta, who as *rājasthānīya* ('Viceroy' in the present context) ruled the tract bounded by the (eastern) Vindhyas, the Pāriyātra (the western Vindhyas) and the ocean. He was served by his own ministers (*nija-sachivas*) in the administration of his many provinces (*aneka-deśas*). Evidently the *rājasthānīya* was at liberty to choose his own ministers for the administration of the districts under his charge. How much the traditional practice of hereditary selection of officials was in vogue at this time is illustrated by the fact that not only is Abhayadatta said to be born in a family of officials, but he was succeeded in his office by his nephew.

The administration of Southern Bengal under Gopachandra and other rulers (pp. 200 ff) on which some light is thrown by their copper-plate inscriptions was of the same general type as that of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* under the Imperial Guptas. But there were some slight deviations. All the kings took the imperial title of *mahārājādhirāja* but not with the addition of *paramadaivata* and *paramabhaṭṭāraka,* given

29 Chammak ins. of Pravarasena II. (*CII*, III, pp. 236 ff). The qualifying clause is thus translated by Fleet: 'And this condition of the charter should be maintained by the Brāhmaṇas and by (future) lords, viz., (the enjoyment of this grant is to belong to the Brāhmaṇas) for the same time as the moon and the sun, provided they commit no treason against the kingdom,... that they are not slayers of Brāhmaṇas and are not thieves, adulterers, poisoners of kings etc., that they do not wage war (and) they do no wrong to other villages. But if they act otherwise or assent (to such acts), the king will commit no theft in taking the land away.'

30 *EI*, XXII, p. 167.

31 *CII*, III, pp. 104, 108.

to the Gupta emperors in the North Bengal inscriptions. Probably, while asserting their independence, they did not presume to place themselves on the level of their former overlords. Nevertheless, they adopted epithets reminiscent of those of the great Guptas, such as *prithivyām-apratiratha* ('who had no equal-antagonist in the world') and *Yayāty-Ambarīsha-samadhriti* ('whose fortitude was equal to that of Yayāti and Ambarīsha') which were applied both to Gopachandra and Dharmāditya. As in the days of the Guptas, the district officer was normally appointed by the *uparika* in charge of the higher administrative division. By the side of the district officer there stood the *adhikaraṇa* as the authority for disposal of State lands. Unfortunately we have no definite account of the composition of this body. In one inscription of Dharmāditya and another of Gopachandra, we are only told that it had the chief *kāyastha* (*jyeshṭha-kāyastha*) as its leading member, while the inscription of Samāchāradeva informs us still more vaguely that it had the chief *adhikaraṇika* at its head. It is not unlikely that the *adhikaraṇa* also contained the three other members known to its prototype in the northern province under the Guptas, viz., *the sreshṭhī*, the *sārthavāha* and the *prathama-kulika*. By way of exception, the Mallasarul inscription of the time of Gopachandra, while referring to Vardhamāna-*bhukti*, is completely silent about the name of the district and mentions instead the *adhikaraṇa* of the *vīthi*. But we are left completely in the dark about the composition of this last-named body.

We have mentioned above that the *adhikaraṇa* is entrusted in the records under consideration with the sale of State lands. In this work it is associated with a number of specified and unspecified *vishaya-mahattaras*, *mahattaras*, chief *vyaparins* (or *vyavahārins*) and so forth. The first two terms may be taken to be the elders (probably of two distinct grades) belonging to the district and the village respectively, while the next may refer to administrative agents.[32] In these records, then, we mark a continuation of that association of popular representatives with the local administration, which has been noted above as a striking and original feature of the government of Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* in Gupta times.

For the rest, the procedure adopted in these records for the sale of government lands has the same complex character as that implied in the inscriptions of North Bengal under the Imperial Guptas. We have a long string of officials of the type that becomes henceforth a characteristic feature of ancient Indian land-grants. The list com-

32 *IA*, XXXIX, p. 200. The contrary interpretation of these terms by N. K. Bhattasali (*EI*, XVIII, p. 78 and *n*) is not convincing.

prises, besides the familiar *kumārāmātyas, vishayapatis* and *tadāyuktakas*, the *kārtākṛitikas* (perhaps equivalent to the *kṛityākṛityeshu chārthānam viniyojakāḥ* of *Mahābhārata* II. 5.38 meaning, according to Hopkins, *JAOS*, XIII, 128, 'the person having general superintendence of what ought or ought not to be done in affairs.'), the *chauroddharaṇikas* (police officers), the *auparikas* (perhaps identical with *uparikas*), the *aurṇasthānikas* (superintendents of the woollen industry or trade), the *audraṅgikas* (officers charged with collection of the *udraṅga* tax), *agrahārikas* (superintendents of *agrahāras*) and the *hiraṇyasāmudāyikas* (collectors of the tax in cash).

At the opposite extremity of Northern India, in the peninsula of Kāthiāwār, flourished the famous dynasty of Maitrakas (pp. 219 ff). Their administrative machinery comprises mostly the old Gupta official titles, but there are some new names. Among the writers of the Maitraka charters we find a *divirapati*, the head of *diviras* (or clerks),[33] an office which may be traced back to a copper-plate inscription of the Uchchakalpa *mahārāja* Jayanātha. The *pramātṛi*, an officer mentioned for the first time, probably means the officer connected with the department of land-survey. Among the other officers, the *drāṅgika* was the officer-in-charge of the *draṅga* (military outpost of customhouse), the *daṇḍapāśika* was the police officer, the *dhruvasthānādhikaraṇika* was the officer with the duty of supervision of *dhruvas* (revenue-farmers), and the *anutpanna-dānasamudgrāhaka* was the officer concerned with forcible collections of the so-called voluntary gifts by the subjects.[34] The Maitraka administration was sufficiently complex to include the offices of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Secretary, and Chief Accountant, besides the officers in charge of police and revenue departments. Like the Guptas, the Maitrakas favoured the claims of hereditary descent in the selection of officers. In one of their records[35] the writer of the charter is a *divirapati* who is the son of a *sandhivigrahādhikṛita-divirapati*. This example, also shows that the Maitrakas, like the Guptas, were not averse to the combination of different offices in the same person.

In local administration the Maitrakas followed the Gupta precedent, though with a changed nomenclature. From the description of their donated lands, we learn that their kingdom was divided into administrative divisions and sub-divisions called *bhukti, vishaya* (or

33 *CII*, III, p. 122. The meaning of *divira* as 'clerk' was first pointed out by Bühler (*IA*, VI, p. 10) on the authority of Kshemendra's *Lokaprakāśa*.

34 On *dhruvādhikaraṇika* and *anutpanna-dāna-samudgrāhaka*, see HRS, pp. 221-22.

35 *EI*, I, pp. 87-88.

haraṇī or *prāveśya*) and *peṭha* (or *sthalī*).[36] An example of a division called *āhāra* occurs in some of the records.

The revenue administration of the Maitrakas has some original features. We have already referred to the offices of the *dhruvādhikaraṇika* and the *anutpanna-dāna-samudgrāhaka* as implying the farming of revenues and the levy of the so-called voluntary contributions respectively. A clause called *pūrva-prattadeya-brahmadeya-Brāhmaṇa-viṁśati-varjam* occurring in some of the land grants suggested that a tithe for the support of Brāhmaṇas was imposed upon the villagers in the Kāthiāwār tract in this period.

3. *Harsha, his Contemporaries and Successors*

Reference has been made above (pp. 266 ff) to the administrative machinery of Harsha's kingdom. It was essentially the same as that of the Imperial Guptas. The *dūtaka* of his two land-grants was a *mahā-pramātāra-mahāsāmanta*: the edict was incised in the one case at the command of a *mahākshapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛita-sāmantamahārāja* and in the other case by a *mahākshapaṭalika-sāmantamahārāja*. The *mahāpramātāra* here mentioned is evidently a high imperial officer of the same class as, but ranking higher than, the *pramātṛi* of the Maitraka records mentioned above. The *mahākshapaṭalādhikaraṇ-ādhikṛita* was in charge of the accounts department. The title *mahā-sāmanta* or *sāmanta-mahārāja* attached to these offices would seem to indicate that like the Imperial Guptas, Harsha utilised the services of his feudatories for the direct administration of his empire. In the branch of provincial administration it may be noticed that Harsha's dominion was divided into the usual *bhuktis* and *vishayas*, of which examples are given in his land-grants.

Among the contemporaries of Harsha, none was more remarkable than Bhāskara-varman, king of Kāmarūpa (pp. 253 ff). His administrative system was based on the familiar divisions such as *vishaya* and the reference to the *vishayapatis* and *adhikaraṇas* in his record suggests the association of the district officer and the district board which, as noticed above, was a characteristic of the Imperial Gupta administration in North Bengal in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Among officers mentioned by name in his inscription are *prāpta-pañcha-mahāśabda*, one who has obtained 'the five great sounds' (otherwise translated as 'the five great offices of State'), a *sīmā-pradātā* who is also the *nāyaka* of the district of Chandrapuri, a *nyāyakaraṇika*, a *kāyastha*, a *śāsayitā* who is also the *lekhayitā*, a *bhāṇḍāgārādhikṛita*

36 *EI*, VIII, pp. 188 ff; XVII, pp. 105 ff; XI, 104 ff; *IA*, XV, pp. 186 ff. respectively.

who is also a *mahāsāmanta*, and an *utkheṭayitā*. The first two appear to have been executive officers entrusted respectively with carrying the king's orders into effect and fixing the boundaries of the donated land among the large number of donees; the third was a judicial officer, the fourth was a scribe, the fifth was the officer specially entrusted with the execution of the charter, the sixth was the treasury-officer, and the seventh and last was entrusted with the collection of taxes. The bare list of these names, which also includes *vyavahārī*, is sufficient to indicate the complexity of the administrative machine in Kāmarūpa in Bhāskaravarman's reign.

In the last quarter of the seventh and the first half of the eighth century Magadha rose to a position of imperial greatness under a dynasty known to history as 'The Later Guptas of Magadha' (pp. 190 ff) The string of officials mentioned in Jīvita-gupta II's inscription include two new names, the *talavātaka* and *sīmā-karmakāra* (maker of boundaries perhaps of the donated lands), the rest being known to us from the Gupta times. The records of the later Guptas also testify to the continuation of the old administrative divisions called *bhukti* and *vishaya*.

Some further light is thrown upon the administrative organisation of Magadha and the adjoining lands at this period by the testimony of a number of clay-seals and sealings with legends written in seventh and eighth century characters. These objects have been recovered from Nālandā,[37] and the legends thereon acquaint us with three large administrative divisions (*bhuktis*), viz., those of Magadha, Śrāvastī and Nagara, as well as two smaller divisions (*vishayas*), viz., those of Rājagṛiha and Gayā. The Rājagṛiha-*vishaya* is further sub-divided into a division (*naya*) called Pilipiñchchhā. Still more important is the fact that not only Gayā-*vishaya* but also the above-named *naya* of Rājagṛiha-*vishaya* and an unnamed *naya* belonging to Śrāvastī-*bhukti* are recorded to have their separate *adhikaraṇas* (offices) as well as common seals. The Nālandā seals, moreover, refer to the *adhikaraṇas* of Kumārāmātyas belonging to Nagara-*bhukti*. It is interesting to observe that the seals of the *kumārāmātyādhikaraṇas* of Nālanda have the same device of the goddess Lakshmī as those at Bhita and Basarh noticed above. The Nālandā seals, lastly, point to the institution of *dharmādhikaraṇas* (courts of justice) which were doubtless of the same type as the *dharmāsan-ādhikaraṇas* commemorated in a Basarh seal-legend mentioned above. Though we have no knowledge of the composition and functions of the *adhikaraṇas* of *vishayas* and *nayas* functioning in Magadha and the adjoining lands in the seventh-

37 *MASI*, no. 66, pp. 49-53.

eighth centuries A.D., we cannot but be struck with their similarity with the *adhikaranas* of *vishayās*, *vīthis* and so forth prevailing in Bengal in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Probably it will not be unsafe to infer on general grounds that like the types prevailing in North Bengal under the Imperial Guptas, and in South and East Bengal under the independent kings of the sixth century, the *vishayādhikaranas* and *nayādhikaraṇas* of the Upper Ganges Valley involved the association of representatives of trade and industry with local government.

We may next turn to the records of some minor dynasties of Orissa in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. as furnishing some interesting examples of variety amid the general administrative uniformity. The Paṭiākella copper-plate inscription of the time of Śambhuvaśas[38] (p 216) refers to a new official called *brihadbhogika*. Evidently he was superior in rank to *bhogika* whom we have traced back to the records of the Parivrājaka and Uchchhakalpa *mahārājas* of Bundelkhand. Another dynasty ruling in Orissa in the same period (seventh and eighth centuries A.D.) was that of the Karas. A peculiar feature of their administrative system is the number of queens who reigned in their own right and assumed the usual imperial titles (above, p. 494). We hear, among others, of queens Tribhuvana-*mahādevī*, and Dandi-*mahādevī*, who assumed the titles *paramabhaṭṭārika-mahārājādhirāja-parameśvarī*. Of Tribhuvana-*mahādevī* we are told that she was induced by the feudatory chieftains to ascend the throne at a time of great crisis in the fortunes of the family. This illustrates not only the extraordinary capacity of the queen, but also the public spirit of the chieftains. The officials mentioned by name in the inscriptions of this dynasty include a new name, viz., *sthānāntarika*.

We may trace the administrative organisation of the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal in the light of a series of inscriptions ranging from the fifth to the eighth centuries A.D.[39] The administration of the kingdom naturally conformed to the type prevailing in the plains. But there were some remarkable features arising, no doubt, from the isolated situation of the land. Next to the king the machinery of the central government consisted of high officers of State, such as a *sarvadaṇḍanāyaka Mahāpratīhāra*, *sarvadaṇḍanāyaka. Rājaputra*, a *vārttā* and a *bhaṭṭāraka-pādīya* (a name equally unknown with the *vārttā* outside Nepal). Of the above, the *mahāpratīhāra* is a well-known official title of the Imperial Gupta period meaning probably 'Chief of the Palace-Guards.' The title *sarvadaṇḍanāyaka*, which

38 *EI*, IX, pp. 287 ff. with corrections by N. G. Majumdar (*EI*, XXIII, p. 200).

39 For references to those inscriptions, see above, pp. 211 ff.

may be taken to be the Nepalese equivalent of the *mahādaṇḍanāyaka* of the Imperial Guptas, probably means the Chief Judge in criminal trials.[40] The *bhaṭṭāraka-pādīya* was probably a high officer on the personal staff of the king.[41] The *vārttās*, as Lévi points out,[42] correspond exactly to the *vrittiyas* of modern Nepal, who are a class of vassals holding revenue-free fiefs in perpetuity, but without the right of jurisdiction. Besides the high officers of State above-mentioned, there was the *mahābalādhyaksha* (Supreme Commander in War) who was evidently the equivalent of the *mahābalādhikṛita* mentioned in an inscription of the Parivrājaka *mahārāja* Hastin. Lévi points out the interesting fact that the common ancient Indian formula of donation of lands, which is first found in the inscriptions of Hastin (nos. 83-84) and is probably derived from the Imperial Guptas, occurs for the first time in the inscription of the Lichchhavi king Vasantadeva.[43]

Interesting light is thrown upon the methods of village administration in Nepal during this period by the description of concessions granted by the kings in favour of specified villages. A fragmentary inscription[44] mentions a two-fold privilege (*prasāda-dvayam*) evidently conferred by the king upon a village. First, the entrance of regular and irregular troops was to be prohibited for all time; in the second place, the *malla* tax was apparently to be remitted above the rate of four copper *paṇas* according to usage. In other records we read that the *adhikṛita* (government officer) may enter the village for collection of the 'three taxes' alone 'according to usage,' but not for grant of written records, the trial for 'the five offences' and so forth. Similar to the above is the order of king Śiva-deva II to the effect that all the judicial officers should be forbidden to enter the village and that the local proprietor alone will have jurisdiction over the cases as they arise.[45] The above texts evidently refer to the traditional system of village government prevailing not only in Nepal, but also in the rest of India.[46] Under this system the village formed a little republic managing its affairs with little or no interference by

40 Lévi translates it as 'commandant-in-chief' (I, p. 28), 'general-in-chief' (III, p. 101) and 'generalassimo' (III, p. 48). But as in the parallel case of the Imperial Gupta inscriptions, the simultaneous occurrence of *mahābalādhyaksha* in the Nepalese records (Cf. Bendall, no. II) makes this explanation improbable. Cf. Basak, *HNI*, p. 246 n.

41 Cf. Lévi III, p. 60.

42 *Op. cit.*, II, p. 131.

43 *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 117-18.

44 Lévi, no. XI.

45 Lévi, nos. IX, XII.

46 Cf. Lévi, I, pp. 281-82.

State officials. From the records under consideration we can infer that the chief occasions on which the villages could ordinarily be entered by the royal officers were the collection of the three taxes, the issue of written orders and the trial for 'the five offences'. The most urgent of these occasions, from which even the most favoured villagers are not exempted, was the collection of the three-fold tax.[47] Evidently, the assessment of taxes upon cultivators by the direct agency of government officers was accepted as the general rule.[48] Besides the visits of royal officers just mentioned, the entrance of the king's troops into the villages was regarded as great hardship. How widespread was this custom of entrance of the king's troops into villages is proved by the fact that immunity from this evil is one of the most frequently repeated clauses of ancient Indian land-grants from the time of the Sātavāhanas and Early Pallavas onwards.

Like other Indian States, Nepal had its body of feudatories who are called *sāmantas* or even *nṛipas*. In a famous inscription king Mānadeva expresses his determination to punish hostile *sāmantas* of the eastern quarter and place on the throne those *nṛipas* who would submit to his orders.[49] Successfully accomplishing this task, the king subjugated the hostile *sāmantas* in the western quarter. In the time of king Śiva-deva I, the *mahāsāmanta* Aṁśuvarman made himself so powerful that all the grants of his nominal overlord were issued at his request. He is also credited in the inscriptions with the possession of pompous qualities quite unlike the simple description of the king. From his coin-legends and from references in the inscriptions of his successor we know that Aṁśuvarman afterwards adopted the imperial title of *mahārājādhirāja*. Under Aṁśuvarman and his successor there was a double line of rulers, the kings of the old legitimate dynasty issuing their orders from the palace at Mānagṛiha, and the line of the usurper doing the same from the new palace at Kailāsakūṭabhavana (above, pp. 215, 576).

47 Lévi (*op. cit.*, I, p. 283) thinks that the three taxes consisted of *bhāga, bhoga* and *hiraṇya,* which he translates respectively as 'share of crops,' 'tax upon objects of luxury' and 'gold.' These terms have been explained differently by the present writer in *HRS*. pp. 60, 62, 214.

48 The *malla* tax is peculiar to Nepal, but as Lévi says (*op cit.*, II, p. 212 *n*, III, p. 68), it may be compared with the *turushka-daṇḍa* of the inscriptions of king Govindachandra of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj. The nature of 'the five offences' and the penalties attending them are illustrated in an inscripion of Śivadeva II (Lévi, no. XX). In this record it is mentioned among the concessions granted to the favoured village that the king's officers should seize the person alone of the man committing five offences such as theft, adultery, murder and complicity. Cf. *HRS*, p. 233.

49 Lévi, no. I.

4. *The Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauj.*

With the rise of the imperial Pratihāras and other contemporary dynasties opens a new era in the history of public administration in Northern India. With it begins the type of constitution called clan-monarchy by Baden-Powell, which flourished largely in Rajasthan in medieval times.[50] In this type of government the central or at any rate the best part of the kingdom was appropriated by the king, while the outlying and inferior portions were assigned to the lesser chiefs of the clan. The king collected the land-revenue entirely from his domain, leaving the chiefs to contribute aids in times of war and fees on succession.

The central portions of the Pratihāra dominion appear to have been divided for administrative purposes into the traditional *bhuktis*, sub-divided into *maṇḍalas* and *vishayas*. Some records illustrate the methods of town administration that were in vogue under the direct rule of these emperors. The Gwalior inscription of 933 V.S. (A.D. 876)[51] shows how the affairs of this great fortified town (and probably of other important towns as well) were conducted in the time of Bhoja I. A certain Alla, we are told, was the officer in charge of the fort (*koṭṭapāla*) while Tattaka was the commander of the army (*balādhikṛita*) and a Board consisting of two persons called *śreshṭhīs* and one Chief called *sārthavāha* was apparently in charge of the civil administration. Not only was the civil administration of the town separated from the military, but further, the command of the fort was divided (no doubt for reasons of security) from that of the forces stationed near about. The concluding lines of the record give us some further indication of the character of the civil administration. Here we read that the whole town made a gift of land in two specified villages which were in its own possession. It would therefore appear that besides the town-executive just described, there was a town council in which the proprietory rights of these villages were vested. We have a hint of the care with which the administration of these villages was conducted in the description of the donated land according to the length and breadth as measured by royal cubits (*parameśvarīya-hasta*). Evidently, the official unit of measurement was applied by the town council for the management of the land in its occupation. From another inscription of the same reign, dated 932 V.S. (A.D. 875)[52], we

50 See Baden-Powell, *Landsystems of British India*, I, pp. 250 ff, and *Indian Village Community*, pp. 196 ff. See *HRS*. pp. 236, 241, 259-60 for example of this type in ancient Indian history.

51 *EI*, I, p. 159.

52 *Ibid.*, I, p. 156.

learn that Alla's father Vāillabhaṭṭa was born in a Nāgara Brāhmaṇa family and was appointed Warden of the Marches (*maryādā-dhurya*) by the emperor Rāmabhadra, and that Alla succeeded to this office and was further appointed guardian of the fort by Bhoja I. This illustrates two characteristics of the period, viz., the elasticity of the caste-system and the choice of the highest military commanders from father to son.

We have some illustrations of the working of the internal administration of the imperial Pratihāras in their demesne lands. The Barah (Kanpur district) inscription of Bhoja[53] states that he restored an *agrahāra* which had been approved by Nāgabhaṭa II, but had fallen into abeyance in the reign of Rāmabhadra because of the incapacity of the *vyavahārin* (legal or judicial officer). This would suggest an efficient system of official supervision for rectifying the mistakes of subordinates. Next we may mention an inscription[54] recording the grant of a village by Mahendrapāla II in the holding of a certain *talavargika* (official term of uncertain meaning) in the western *pathaka* (district) of Daśapura. From this we can guess that officials used to receive assignments of land which could be resumed at least in part by the Crown at its pleasure. It further appears that administrative divisions of the kind, known elsewhere, were also prevalent here at this time.

We have so long dealt with the territory presumably under the direct administration of the Pratihāra emperors. The remaining portion of the empire was governed by feudatory chiefs belonging to the various well-known Rājput clans mentioned above. Besides referring to the territories ruled by clan-chiefs, the records of the Pratihāras refer to the unit of eighty-four villages which is the size of the typical clan-chief's estate in the medieval history of Rājasthan. A copper-plate inscription from Kāthiāwār[55] records the gift, by *mahāsāmanta* Balavarman of Chālukya lineage, of a village belonging to a group of eighty-four 'which he had acquired by his own arms'. Another copper-plate inscription mentions the gift by a certain Avantivarman II of a village belonging to a group of eighty-four in Saurāshṭra-maṇḍala.

The Sīvadoṇi inscription[56] (tenth century A.D.) acquaints us with the methods of town administration under the control of feudatories

53 *Ibid.*, XIX, p. 17. For another instance of restoration of a lapsed land-grant by Bhoja I. see *Ibid.*, V, p. 211.

54 *Ibid.*, XIV, p. 182.

55 *Ibid.*, IX, p 4.

56 *Ibid*, I, p. 175.

An obscure clause in the inscription seems to suggest that the *maṇḍapikā* (custom-house?) was in charge of a *pañchakula* (committee of five) of which the leading member alone is mentioned by name. This would point to a continuation of that association of the popular element with the local administration which we have traced back to the Gupta times Other records of the imperial Pratihāras refer to the employment of feudatories in the direct task of administration, some of them holding the offices of the governor, *mahāpratīhāra,* and *daṇḍanāyaka*

In the number and connections of the clan-chiefs of the type just described lay undoubtedly the weakness of the imperial Pratihāra administration. That the Pratihāras were alive to this danger is proved by the precautions which they took in keeping the feudatories under control. An inscription dated 1003 v.s. (A. D. 946) gives the interesting information that a certain Śrī-śarman appointed by the *balādhikṛita* (general) of the emperor was carrying on the administration of the *maṇḍapikā* (custom-house) at that time.[57] This direct appointment of a high officer by the imperial administration was probably meant to be a check upon the feudatory Mādhava who was no doubt in charge of the province concerned. If the Vidagdha at the end of the inscription has been correctly identified with Mahendrapāla II, it would show how the emperor insisted on countersigning the donations of land by his feudatories. Similarly, other inscriptions referred to above show how the grant in each case required the approval of a certain Dhīika described as the *tantrapāla* of Mahendrapāla II. Nevertheless the feudatories continued to be a source of danger to the State. An interesting feature of the age was the title *mahārājādhirāja* assumed by the chiefs Dhūrbhaṭa and Nishkalaṅka of the Sīyaḍoṇi inscription and that of *mahārāja parameśvara* adopted by Mathanadeva of the Rajorgarh inscription.[58]

5. *Contemporaries and Successors of the Imperial Pratihāras*

By far the most important of the dynasties contemporaneous with the imperial Pratihāras in Northern India were their rivals for the prize of the empire, viz., the Pālas of Bengal. The Pāla monarchy was distinguished from all other monarchical governments of the plains by the circumstances of its origin, which has been referred to above (p. 650). But although the first king was elected to the throne, the Pāla government was of the usual North Indian type of a strong here-

57 Ojha (*EI*, XIV, p. 181) understands *maṇḍapikā* to refer to Mandu, but this is belied by the reference to the grant of *maṇḍapikā* in the Sīyaḍoṇi inscriptions, where it must refer to an office situated within the town limits

58 *EI*, III, p. 266.

ditary monarchy, and there is no question of any constitutional restraint upon the king's authority. Indeed, it would seem that the extraordinary success of the early Pālas in consolidating their internal administration and extending their foreign dominion, helped to endow the monarchy with unequalled strength. The Pāla kings from the first assumed the imperial title of *parameśvara-paramabhaṭṭāraka-mahārājādhirāja* of which the precedent (as we have seen above) was set by the Imperial Guptas in their North Bengal inscriptions.

Next in rank to the king stood the princes of the blood who were sometimes entrusted with high military commands.[59] As noted above, a distinguished Brāhmaṇa family supplied a succession of what can only be called Chief Ministers to the early Pālas, though they are not expressly mentioned as such. How much this family, according to its own testimony, overshadowed the monarchy has already been stated (p. 661). This influence, however, must have been derived entirely from the personal capacity of the individual ministers, and not from any constitutional right or privilege belonging to the office. The high position of a Brāhmaṇa family under a Buddhist dynasty is a further illustration of the traditional policy of enlightened tolerance pursued by the kings of ancient India.

The list of officials and others mentioned in the legal formulas of the land-grants of the early Pālas, in so far as they reflect the actual conditions of administration and not a fixed legal tradition, may be taken to illustrate the machinery of central and local government in their time. In the Khālimpur grant of Dharmapāla[60] the list is as follows: *rājarājanaka, rājaputra, rājāmātya, senāpati, vishayapati, bhogapati, shashṭhādhikṛita, daṇḍaśakti, daṇḍapāśika, chauroddharaṇika, daussādhasādhanika, dūta, khola, gamāgamika, abhitvaramāṇa, hastyaśvagomahishājāvikādhyaksha, nāvādhyaksha* (for the incorrect *nākādhyaksha*), *balādhyaksha, tarika, śaulkika, gaulmika, tadāyuktaka, viniyuktaka* and so forth. Some names in this list are found in the later records of the Pālas. They are *rājāmātya, dūta, vishayapati, gamāgamika, abhitvaramāṇa, hastyaśvagomahishājāvikādhyaksha, chauroddharaṇika, śaulkika, gaulmika, tadāyuktaka, viniyuktaka.* Other titles drop out of the list in later Pāla records. Such are *senāpati, bhogapati, shashṭhādhikṛita, daṇḍaśakti, khola, nāvādhyaksha* and *balādhyaksha.* In their place other names are added in the later Pāla inscriptions, such as *pramātṛi, śarabhaṅga* (or *sarabhaṅga*), *kumārāmātya, rājasthānīya, uparika, dāśāparādhika, hastyaśvoshṭrabalāvyāpṛitaka, dāṇḍika, praishaṇika, kshetrapa* (or *kshetrapāla*), *prānta-*

59 Cf. e.g. the careers of Vākpāla and Jaya-pāla (p. 672).
60 Cf. list of Pāla inscriptions on p. 680.

pāla, koṭṭapāla, khaṇḍaraksha, grāmapati, tarapati and so forth. The later records mention above all a group of titles with the prefix *mahān,* such as *mahākārtākṛitika, mahādaṇḍanāyaka, mahāpratīhāra, mahādaussādhasādhanika, mahākumārāmātya, mahāsāndhivigrahika, mahākshapaṭalika, mahāsenāpati,* and perhaps *mahāmantrī* (found only in the Bāṇgarh grant of Mahīpāla I). Leaving aside for the present the titles of feudatories and of officers of the local administration, we may take the above, notwithstanding the obscurity of most of the terms, to illustrate the main branches of the central government in the times of the early Pālas. The departments with their principal officers may be enumerated as follows:- Finance (*shashṭhādhikṛita, tarika, tarapati* and *śaulkika*), Police (*daṇḍaśakti, daṇḍapāśika, chauroddharaṇika* and perhaps, *gaulmika*), Army and Navy (*senāpati, nāvādhyaksha* and *balādhyaksha*), besides executive officers of a more indefinite character (*rājāmātya, daussādhasādhanika, dūta, khola, gamāgamika, abhitvaramāṇa, tadāyuktaka* and *viniyuktaka*) and Superintendents (*adhyakshas*) of the king's herds and studs of animals. Later times witnessed the creation of new offices representing Finance (*tarapati* etc.), Police (*daṇḍika,* perhaps corresponding to the older *daṇḍaśakti*), Justice (*daśāparādhika,* and perhaps *rājasthānīya* and *pramātṛi*), Army (*hastyaśvoshṭrabhalavyapṛitaka, prantapāla, koṭṭapāla,* and perhaps *khaṇḍaraksha*), besides the more indefinite *śarabhaṅga, kshetrapa* etc. The later records, above all, testify to the creation of a whole set of high imperial offices some of which date back to the times of the Imperial Guptas or even earlier, while others are now mentioned for the first time. The departments with their principal officers are as follows: Foreign affairs (*mahāsāndhivigrahika*), Accounts (*mahākshapaṭalika*), Army (*mahāsenāpati*), and perhaps Criminal Justice (*mahādaṇḍanāyaka*), besides comprising the more indefinite offices of *mahākārtākṛitika, mahādaussādhasādhanika,* and *mahākumārāmātya.*[61]

61 *Rājāmātya* is of uncertain meaning, but it at least represents an individual *amātya* (or class of *amātyas*) superior in rank to the *kumārāmātyas* mentioned above. Vogel (*Antiquities* etc., p. 102) translates it as 'minister or councillor attached to the *rāja.*' *Dūtapraishaṇika* (from *preshaṇa* or sending), *gamāgamika* (one who goes and comes) and *abhitvaramāṇa* ('one who hurries') have evidently the same general meaning of messenger, Cf. Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-26. For *hasty-aśva-go-mahish-āj-āvik-ādhyaksha* (meaning probably 'Superintendent of the royal studs and herds of those animals'). Cf. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* II, 29-32. *Chauroddharaṇika* is a technical title for a class of king's officers (Cf. Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 129). Jolly (*Recht und Sitte,* 124) takes it to be synonymous with *chuaroddhartṛi* and *chauragraha* of the law books. *Saulkika* is the superintendent of tolls. *Gaulmika,* according to Fleet, means 'superintendent of woods and forests' but it is more properly taken by Vogel (*op. cit.*, p. 127) to mean a military for police official as *gulma* is used in the sense of patrol.

In local government the Pālas adopted the system of administrative divisions into larger units called *bhuktis* and smaller units called *maṇḍalas, vishayas, vīthis, etc.*[62] We may take it as a sign of the continuity of administrative organisations that some of these divisions like Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti*, Nagara-*bhukti* and Tīra-*bhukti* go back to the Gupta times, though the minor units have new names. With the administrative divisions just mentioned, we may connect some of the offices occurring in the lists quoted above. It is thus natural to consider the *uparikas* as being in charge of the *bhuktis*, while the *vishayapatis* would of course be in charge of the *vishayas*. In the formulas of the Pāla land-grants, we miss the *adhikaraṇas* of the Imperial Gupta times in North Bengal and those of the independent kings of South and East Bengal of the same period. The Khālimpur copper-plate inscription mentions instead, among the persons receiving information of the grant, a number of *vishaya-vyavahāriṇs* (district officials) such as the leading scribe (*jyeshṭhakāyastha*), the village elders (*mahāmahattaras* and *mahattaras*) and the lords of ten villages (*dāśagrāmikas*).[63] The village itself, as we learn from the inclusion of the *grāmapati* in the list of officers quoted above, was in charge of the headman.

The administrative organisation of the contemporary kings of

The meanings of *tadāyuktaka* and *viniyuktaka* are uncertain. *Khola* may mean a spy (*BIH*, p 189). *Daṇḍapāśika* (derived from *daṇḍa* and *pāśa*, 'rod' and 'rope') was the officer entrusted with the punishment of criminals (Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 129). *Daṇḍaśaka*, probably the equivalent of the more familiar *dāṇḍika*, is a police-officer. *Pramātṛi* is taken by Vogel (*op. cit.*, p 122) on the authority of Śrīvara's *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (I. 70) to mean an officer entrusted with the administration of justice. But the term may as well mean an officer concerned with land-survey, for Śrīvara simply describes *pramātṛi* as deciding between two persons sharing in an inheritance. *Rājasthānīya*, according to Stein (*Rājataraṅgiṇī*, tr., I, p 316 *n.*), followed by Vogel (*op. cit.*, p 122), means 'Chief Justice.' *Dāśāparādhika* is probably the judicial officer concerned with the trial of the ten offences. *Kshetrapa*, according to Vogel (*op. cit.*, p 123), appears to be a police-officer. *Prāntapāla* and *Koṭṭapāla* are evidently 'Warden of the Marches' and 'Commander of the Fort' respectively. *Khaṇḍaraksha* (with its variant *Aṅgaraksha*), in the present context, probably represents a military officer (*BIH*, p 193). The titles *mahādaṇḍanāyaka, mahāpratīhāra, mahāsenāpati*, etc., have already been met with in the older records.

62 The early Pāla records mention the following *bhuktis* with their sub-divisions: (i) Puṇḍravardhana-*bhukti* with (a) Vyāghrataṭi-*maṇḍala* and its sub-division Mahāntaprakāśa-*vishaya* ins. no. 1 and (b) Kuddalakhāta-*vishaya* (no. 10), (ii) Nagara-*bhukti* with (a) Rājagṛiha-*vishaya* and its sub-division Ajapura-*naya* and Achala-*naya* and (b) with Gayā-*vishaya* and its sub-division Kumudasūtra-*vīthi* (no. 3), (iii) Nagara-*bhukti* with Krimila-*vishaya* (no. 2), (iv) Tīra-*bhukti* with Kaksha-*vishaya* (no. 6).

63 The *dāśagrāmika* is reminiscent of the lowest grade of rural officers according to a classification common to *Manu*, VII, 118-19 and the *Mahābhārata*, XII, 68, 6-8.

Kāmarūpa (pp. 584 ff) was of the usual North Indian type consisting of a hereditary monarchy assisted by a bureaucracy of officials. But it was marked by several distinctive features. The kings assumed the imperial style of *mahārājādhirāja parameśvara paramabhaṭṭaraka* or more shortly, *mahārājādhirāja* . Not only did the kingship descend by hereditary succession, but the reigning king often nominated his successor. We learn from the copper-plate inscriptions of Balavarman[64] that king Vanamāla abdicated in favour of his son Jayamāla, and that the latter did the same in favour of his son Balavarman. We have, however, a remarkable instance of two princes Chakra and Arathi being passed over in favour of the latter's son for the offence of disregarding the voice of their elders.[65] Apparently in extreme cases, the body of elders could prevent an unworthy heir from succeeding to the throne. Of the offices of State a *mahāsainyapati* a *mahādvārādhipatya* (term of unknown meaning), a *mahāpratīhāra* and a *mahāmātya,* as well as a *Brāhmaṇādhikāra* (meaning unknown) are mentioned by name in the copper-plate inscription of Harjaravarman. The fragmentary Rock inscription of Harjaravarman also refers to a number of *balādhyakshas.* It appears from the above that the kingdom of Kāmarūpa in the ninth century had a staff of imperial officers of the type known to the Gupta Empire. The *mahāmātya* and the *mahāsainyapati* were evidently the heads of the civil and military administration respectively, the *balādhyakshas* being subordinate to the latter. The *mahāpratīhāra,* as we have suggested, was the chief of the Palace-Guards. As regards the branch of local administration, the kingdom consisted of the old familiar divisions called *vishayas.* Probably there was also a number of district officers. The copper-plate inscription of Balavarman mentions, among the persons receiving information of the king's grant, the country-people headed by the *vishaya-karaṇas* and the *vyavahārikas.* Another statement in the same record proves that the village, while enjoying no doubt its traditional autonomy, could be visited by persons connected with the royal family and administration, who are here branded as creator of trouble (*upadravakāriṇaḥ*) and are expressly forbidden to enter the privileged land. The list of such visitors includes the queen, the princes, the feudatories, the royal favourites, those engaged in tying up

64 The inscriptions of Assam have been conveniently collected together (with text, tr. and notes etc.) by Padmanath Bhaṭṭacharya in the *Kāmarūpa-śāsanāvalī.* Those falling within the limits of the present period may be serially numbered as follows: No. 1—Tezpur Rock ins. of Harjaravarman dated G. E. 510-. No. 2—Hayiungthal CP ins. of Harjaravarman, No. 3—Tezpur Cp. ins. of Vanamāla and No. 4—Sūtārgāon Cp. ins. of Balavarman.

65 Nos. 1 and 4 above.

elephants and mooring boats, police officers of three specified kinds, those charged with collection of various taxes and so forth.[66]

We may now turn to Kashmir. The kingship, as usual, was of the hereditary type, subject to breaks caused in the succession by usurpation and the like. The accession of Yaśaskara (A.D. 939) after the extinction of the Utpala dynasty, however, presents a striking exception to the general rule; for Yaśaskara was elected by an assembly of Brāhmaṇas (p. 547). But this revolution was barren of any constitutional result like the still more important revolution, quoted above, in the ancient history of Bengal, caused by Gopāla's accession to the throne. Coming to the organisation of the bureaucracy, we find that Lalitāditya, the greatest king of Kashmir, is credited by Kalhaṇa with the creation of five new offices (*karmasthānas*) with the prefix *mahān* alongside the eighteen offices attributed to the semi-lengendary king Jalauka.[67] The five offices were those of *mahāpratīhāra, mahāsāndhivigraha, mahāśvaśālā, mahābhāṇḍāgāra* and *mahāsādhanabhāga*, of which the first two, known from Gupta times, seem to mean respectively Chief of Palace-Guards and Minister of Foreign Affairs, while the last three, which are peculiar to Kashmir, apparently signify the Chief Officer of Cavalry, the Chief Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer. The complex bureaucratic structure of Kashmir is also testified to by Kalhaṇa's incidental references to State Offices in the later reigns. Some of these offices like *nagarādhipa* (Prefect of the City), *pratīhāra, daṇḍanāyaka* (Prefect of Police) and *rājasthānīya* ('Chief Justice', according to Stein) had their counterparts in the kingdoms of the plains. Common to both also was the office of the *akshapaṭala* (Accounts office), although the *ekāṅgas* of the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, forming a kind of military police, are unknown elsewhere. Other offices like those of the *pādāgra* (revenue-collector ?), the *dvārapāla* (commander of the frontier passes) the *maṇḍaleśa* (governor), the *kampaneśa* (commander-in-chief) and the *sarvādhikārin* (prime minister) seem to be more or less peculiar to Kashmir.[68]

The offices mentioned above illustrate the working of the executive and judicial administration in the ancient kingdom of Kashmir. We

66 The words in the original are: *rājñī-rājaputra-rāṇaka-rājavallabha-mahallaka-prauḍhikā-hāstibandhika-naukābandhika-chauroddharaṇika-dāṇḍika dāṇḍapāśika-aupaṇikarika-autkheṭika-chchhatravāsādyupadravakāriṇāmapraveśā.*

67 *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, VI. 141-43; I. 118-20. According to an ancient tradition recorded by Kalhaṇa (*loc. cit.*), Jalauka created 18 offices 'in accordance with traditional usage' in place of the still more primitive group of seven offices (*prakṛitis*)'.

68 For references, see Stein, *Rājat.*, tr., II. Index, *s.v.*

have, further, a number of anecdotes told by Kalhaṇa regarding the judicial decisions of kings exceptionally renowned for their equity and wisdom.[69] Evidently the kings themselves sat, in the immemorial fashion, for the decision of cases. The interest of the Kashmir government in works of public welfare is well illustrated by Kalhaṇa's remarkable account[70] of the extensive drainage and irrigation projects carried into effect by a certain Suyya in the reign of Avantivarman (A.D. 855/56-83). The beneficent results of these constructions are indicated by Kalhaṇa's quotation of the fall in the price of rice, the staple food in the valley. Formerly, the average price of one *khārī* or rice was 200 *dīnāras* in good years and as high as 1050 *dīnāras* in times of famine, but it was reduced to 36 *dīnāras* after Suyya's constructions. The history of the financial administration, on the other hand, is on the whole a dreary record of exactions inflicted by a succession of tyrants.[71]

We shall conclude this chapter with some reference to the early records of the principal dynasties that rose to power on the ruins of the Pratīhāra empire. The administrative organisation of these dynasties must have belonged to the same general type, but there were some interesting features. Thus we have reasons to believe that the ministers of the Kalachuris (Haihayas) of Chedi exercised a considerable influence upon the administration of this kingdom. We come across two Brāhmaṇa Chief Ministers (*mantri-pradhāna*), viz., Bhāvamiśra and his son Someśvara, who successfully served king Yuvarāja I and his son Lakshmaṇarāja.[72] Of another king Kokalla II we are told that he was raised to the throne by his principal ministers (*amātya-mukhyas*).[73] In the Karitalai inscription[74] the donated land is said to lie in Mālava-*dvādaśaka* (the Mālava group of twelve). This proves the existence of the typical clan-chief's estate consisting of eighty-four villages, which we have noted as a characteristic of mediaeval Rājput clan-monarchies. Coming to the Paramāras of Malwa we find that the donated village in an inscription of king Sīyaka is described as belonging to the holding of a certain *mahāsādhanika* in

69 Cf. the stories of Chandrāpīḍa (*Rājat.*, iv. 55 ff; 85 ff) and Yaśaskara, *ibid.*, vi, 14 ff.

70 *Rājat.*, v. 84 ff.

71 For a detailed account, see *HRS*, pp. 249-52 and *IHQ*, XVIII, pp. 307-9. Also Cf. Ch. XVIII above.

72 See Karitalai ins. of the time of Lakshmaṇarāja (*EI*. II, p. 175).

73 *EI*. XII. p. 210.

74 *EI*, II. p. 175.

a specified group of twelve.[75] This evidently points to the system of assignments of villages to officials, as well as of clan-chiefs' estates of the normal size.

The oldest known inscription of the Chāhamānas of Śākambharī, viz., the Haras Stone inscription of 1030 V.S. (*c.* A.D. 973),[76] points to some characteristic features of the Rājput clan-monarchy. Belonging to the time of Vigraharāja II, this record mentions, in connection with a series of religious endowments, various estates held by the king as well as the junior princes of the clan. Among these are included, besides the villages held by the king, the *bhoga* of Siṁharāja (Vigraharāja's father and predecessor), the *vishaya* acquired by himself belonging to Siṁharāja's brother Vatsarāja, the *vishaya* similarly acquired belonging to Siṁharāja's two brothers Chandrarāja and Govindarāja, the villages held (*sva-bhujyamāna*) by a *duḥsādhya* of Siṁharāja and by a certain Jayanarāja. In the same record the gift-villages of Siṁharāja are located in a specified group of twelve comprised within a certain *vishaya*. This illustrates the super-imposition of the new division into clan-estates upon the older administrative division into *vishayas*.

75 We have a similar description of a donated village as lying in a group of twelve in the Ujjain Cp. ins. of Vākpati II (dated 1036 V. S.), *IA*, XIV, p. 160.

76 *IA*, XLII, pp. 60 ff.